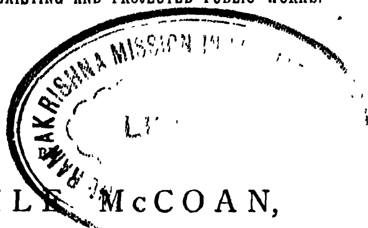
OUR NEW PROTECTORATE

TURKEY IN ASIA

ITS GEOGRAPHY, RACES, RESOURCES, AND GOVERNMENT.

WITH A MAP, SHOWING THE EXISTING AND PROJECTED PUBLIC WORKS.



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PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the Anglo-Turkish Convention has suggested the first title of these volumes, I owe it to myself to say that the idea of the book was conceived, and several of its chapters were written, before the indiscretion of the *Globe* revealed that questionable compact to the world. From the first, I had shared the conviction of all who knew the poverty of the Porte's resources that, however heroic might be its defence, Turkey, unaided, must be beaten in the late struggle, with the result of virtually ceasing to be a European Power; and, in view of the major interest that must thereafter attach to its Asiatic empire, there seemed room for a concise but comprehensive sketch of the present condition of these Eastern Provinces. It can hardly be claimed that this want—which the Convention of June 4 has since greatly emphasized—has been quite completely met by Captain Burnaby's rapid "Ride" from Scutari to Kars, nor even by Mr. Geary's later and very different record of his

journey from Baghdad to Alexandretta. It has in part been more nearly supplied by the excellent letters of Mr. George Barkley to the *Times*, which I take leave to call models of what such a correspondence should be. But as that gentleman's excursion only carried him through Asia Minor and western Armenia, his admirable sketches describe little more than a third of the field covered by our new engagements, and necessarily omit much about even that for which the ampler limits of a book afford space.

My sole qualification for attempting to supplement the work of these writers is—that at considerable intervals of time I have travelled over more of the country than any of the three, and have, so to speak, digested the results of my observations during a long residence in Constantinople under conditions favourable to further acquaintance with most interests of the country. As the narrative of mere personal experience, however, could have little interest for the reader, I have purposely confined my notes of this to the narrowest limits, leaving undescribed, and even unmentioned, several journeys of which scraps of information here and there given are the only result worth recording. In statements of fact and description of places outside my own personal knowledge—which necessarily form the greater part of the book—I have spared no pains to obtain and

carefully sift the best available information; and in the opinions expressed on the whole, I have honestly said what I believe, without either political or religious bias of any kind. If my critics will only credit me with this double fact, and bear in mind that the volumes now submitted to their judgment pretend to be, as stated elsewhere, nothing more than a "slight contribution to popular knowledge of a country to which, for English readers, recent events have given a new and more than ever practical interest," I will bow to their verdict, whether it approve or condemn the book.

In conclusion, my acknowledgments are due to the courtesy of Mr. Allingham and Messrs. Longmans for permission to reprint so much of Chapters VIII., IX., X. and XI. of Vol. I., and of I., II., V. of Vol. II., as appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*.

J. C. McC.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The new relation of England to Eastern Turkey an irreversible fact—The *raison d'être* and object of this book—Asia the true home of the Turks—Their relative numbers and strength west and east of the Bosphorus—The splendid resources yet available in Asia—Area and limits—Three distinct configurations—Ethnographical and physical divisions.

WHATEVER may be the ultimate European consequences of the late war between Russia and the Porte, it is safe to affirm that one at least of its chief issues will be permanent, and fraught with very substantial results to the civilisation and future politics of the East. The treaty of Berlin may—probably will—become as obsolete as those of Vienna and Paris, and the provinces which, a couple of years ago, formed European Turkey, may crystallise into new States, or be absorbed by this Power or that, but the Anglo-Turkish Convention and the new relation it has established between Great Britain and Western Asia

must be regarded as accomplished and pregnant facts, destined to change only in the direction of strengthening and tightening the bond that is henceforth to unite the two countries. The policy of our accepting this new responsibility may be open to question—though I at once confess my own judgment approves it—but, be the verdict of future experience what it may, the die is cast, and British interests are now as irrevocably, though as yet less directly, bound up with Asia Minor as with India itself. In this fact and the other one, that the vast region thus brought for the first time within the scope of our national influence and obligations is but little known to the general reader, lies the excuse, if not the justification for these volumes. The wealth of historical association that attaches to nearly every part of this great territory has attracted archæological explorers in plenty, and in the volumes of Rich, Hamilton, Leake, Layard, Texier, and others we have abundant record of the rich relics that still attest its wondrous past; but I know of no one book that at all concisely, yet comprehensively, describes its chief natural, ethnical, and economical features as they exist at the present day. In the following pages I attempt such a sketch, as a slight contribution to popular knowledge of a country to which, for English readers, recent events have given a new and more than ever practical interest. *Hinc ille libellus.*

Although the Turks have for nearly four centuries occupied an area in Europe larger than France, the

true home of their empire is, and always has been, in Asia. Turkey proper, in fact, lies beyond the Hellespont, west of which its ruling race never took root, and, as we have so often heard, is still only encamped—with its tent-pegs now unloosened for a return to the patrimonial domain. In Europe, out of a heterogeneous population, roughly estimated before the late war at 16,000,000 who acknowledged or disputed the Sultan's authority, only some 2,000,000 are of Ottoman race, and less than 5,000,000 are even Mussulmans by religion; while in Asia, in a territory more than four times as large, out of a total of about 16,500,000 more than 10,000,000 are Mussulmans, and of these nearly one-half are probably of Turkish or Turcoman blood. Hence it is that in the great table-lands of Anatolia, along the slopes of the Taurus, in the valleys of Syria, and on the plains of Irak still largely survive the religious zeal and robust national life which for centuries made the Ottoman power a standing menace to Europe; while in Thrace, in Macedonia, in Bosnia, and the Herzegovina, neither ever attained the same rude vitality; but, under the influences of an uncongenial if not hostile civilisation, almost everywhere declined. This decadence of the Empire in Europe has, however, quite unduly impressed the Western imagination, and led to an underestimate of the splendid resources and potentialities that yet survive to it in Asia. True it is that the eastern provinces have shared in the general administrative neglect and

abuse; but in them the preponderance of the dominant race has largely availed to protect all classes of the population from the extremity of misrule which in Europe has preyed in nearly equal measure on Mussulman and Christian alike. The nature and some of the results of this quite impartial misgovernment will be hereafter described, but, notwithstanding its extent and long duration, it may be at once said that—be the future fortunes of the Turkish empire in so much of Roumelia as is now left to it what they may—in its still vast though also shorn domains beyond the Bosphorus, it yet possesses elements which need only industrial development and better government to become consolidated into a New Turkey, far more stable and peacefully prosperous than the old.

The south-eastern limits of the Porte's sovereignty in Asia are so undefined, that the exact area of its territory can be only approximately stated. Geographers variously reckon it at from 764,100 to 620,800 square miles; but even this latter (the Turkish official) estimate includes much of the great peninsula of Arabia, throughout which, from the Syrian desert to the Indian Ocean, and from Bab-el-Mandeb to Muscat, the Sultan's writ will nowhere run, except in the Hedjaz and Yemen along the Red Sea, and in the still narrower belt of desert west of the Euphrates, between Annah and the Persian Gulf. This vast wedge of mostly desert territory measures nearly 200,000 square miles, which deducted from

even the largest superficial estimate of these Asiatic provinces would reduce their total extent to about 570,000 square miles. But to this, as has been said, the Porte's own estimate adds more than 90,000 square miles, on the ground of a much larger sovereign encroachment in the great southern peninsula than has ever been recognised by the local populations, still less exercised in fact. The exaggeration may, however, be overlooked, and the official figures be accepted as sufficiently accurate for the purposes of a general survey of the material condition of the whole. A hundred thousand square miles more or less in no way affect the especial interest that belongs to this vast theatre of the grandest events in human history, on which race has succeeded race, and empire followed empire — Assyrian, Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, Saracen, Turk—in such heroic, though sanguinary, procession as the earth has witnessed nowhere else.

The physical aspect of this great slice of Western Asia presents three distinct configurations—two vast plateaux and one equally vast plain bounded and diversified by great mountain ridges. Of these, the first of the plateaux stretches across from the shores of the Archipelago to the frontiers of Trans-Caucasia and Persia, with an average elevation of from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea, and forms the base of two parallel mountain ranges, several of whose highest peaks rise above the line of perpetual snow; while the second, which includes Syria and Palestine,

has also its double mountain chains extending across Arabia Petræa, and the peninsula of Sinai to the Red Sea, but is less remarkable for the height of these than for the depression of one of its valleys, which, in the line of the Jordan, sinks to the lowest known inhabited level in the world, being more than 1,300 feet below the sea. The great plain—that of Mesopotamia and Irak—forms the lower basins of the Euphrates and the Tigris; and though now for the most part only a vast steppe, is interesting above every other region of the earth as the cradle of the human race, and the earliest seat of empire.

Partly for ethnographical, and partly for physical, reasons geographers have long recognised five main divisions of the great territory thus distinguished. These are (1) Asia Minor, or Anatolia; (2) Armenia and Kurdistan; (3) Syria and Palestine; (4) Mesopotamia and Irak, or Babylonia; and (5) Western Arabia, comprising the eastern littoral of the Red Sea with a narrow strip of territory inland from below the Gulf of Akaba down to that of Aden. A brief separate sketch of the physical aspect and chief subdivisions of each of these will conveniently introduce some fuller description of their present economical condition. Centuries of misrule have, it will be seen, converted vast tracts that were once populous and fertile into desert wastes and pestilential swamps; but from the ruin and desolation which have thus especially befallen parts of Babylonia, eastern Syria, and central Asia Minor, the bounty of nature—

too strong for even this withering influence—has preserved other tracts larger than European kingdoms, in which the most splendid climate, the grandest natural scenery, and the most luxurious vegetation, are still to be found, requiring only enlightened government to reclaim what is in decay, and to infuse, new, vigorous, and enriching life into the whole. How much this is needed, and how encouragingly abundant and vital are the elements of a great regeneration, it will be the aim of the following chapters to show.

CHAPTER II.

ASIA MINOR.

Largest of the five divisions—Area and limits—Mountain system—Chief passes—Rivers and lakes—Lines of communication, main and secondary—Geology—Climate—The *Archipelago*—Forms separate government—Thasos, Samothrace, and Imbros, Thracian rather than Asiatic—Lemnos—Tenedos—Mytilene—Psyra—Scio—Samos—Icaria—Patmos—Calymno—Cos—Rhodes—Cyprus—Its present economical and sanitary condition—Rhodes or Mytilene preferable for purposes of British occupation.

THIS great division much exceeds any of the others in area, density of population, and natural wealth. In form, an irregular parallelogram about 650 miles in length by 400 miles wide, it is almost separated from the rest of Asia not only by the sea, which surrounds it on three sides, but by the nearly impassable mountain chain which traverses most of the broad isthmus that joins it on to the main continent eastwards. In area it thus about equals France, and is little less than Spain and Portugal, with which it has in physical conformation some striking analogies. Its boundaries are: on the north the Black Sea, on the west the Sea of Marmora and the Ægean, on the

south the Mediterranean, and on the east an imaginary line drawn from the Gulf of Alexandretta to near the meridian of Trebizond.[1] The interior of this extensive region consists, as already stated, of an elevated table-land about 250 miles in length from north-east to south-west, by about 160 miles broad, walled in by a girdle of mountains, outside which lower valleys of varying width, but for the most part of great beauty and fertility, slope down north, west, and southwards to the sea. The southern of these inclosing ranges, the Taurus, begins in the upper basin of the Euphrates, in about 38° N. latitude, and 39° E. long., and under the more specific name of the Amanus, runs in scattered masses towards the Mediterranean, which it then skirts in a nearly parallel line westwards, sending down at many parts branches to the coast, but in others leaving broad alluvial plains between the mountains and the sea. The highest peaks of this great chain reach an elevation of 13,000 feet, and several others rise from 7,000 to 10,000 feet; the more important of them also are known by special names, such as the Karmez-dagh, the Allah-dagh, the

[1] The ancient divisions were—in the south-east Cilicia, west of it Pamphylia and Lycia; on the coast of the Archipelago, Caria, Lydia, and Mysia; on the north, along the Black Sea, Bithynia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus; and inland, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and Galatia. Although the general name of Anadoli (Anatolia) is now given to the whole peninsula by the Turks, the term is more narrowly applied to the western and northern provinces, while those to the south and south-east are collectively called Caramania.

Bulgar-dagh, the Jebel-Kûm and others, which are rather small ranges in themselves than separate heights. Westward this great mountain wall sinks into the Ægean, most of whose southern islands are only so many of its terminal peaks. The corresponding northern range called the Anti-Taurus,[1] which similarly bounds the plateau on the opposite side of the peninsula, has its eastern extremity near Batoum, whence it runs westwards in two or three broken lines, also nearly parallel with the Black Sea coast, to the Bosphorus; and then, trending round south-eastwards behind Ismid, joins the great western network of which the Keshish-dagh (Olympus), the Morad-dagh and the Kas-dagh (Ida) are the most noteworthy masses. Like the Taurus, this northern chain sends off many lateral ridges, on the one side to the sea, and on the other into the interior, which is also intersected by numerous smaller ranges, one of whose peaks—the volcanic Erjish-dagh (of 13,000 feet)—is the second highest in the peninsula. Both these great ranges, as also most of the minor chains, are, as a rule, densely wooded, and have, in many parts, a rich undergrowth of wild vines, myrtle, arbutus, rhododendron, and other shrubs, which softens without at all detracting from the Alpine grandeur of their scenery.

The chief passes of the two main ranges are,

[1] Some cartographers give this name to the Amanus, or north-eastern extension of the Taurus above Adana up to the Armenian system, but the weight of authority is in favour of its application to the great northern chain.

through the Taurus—(1) the Gölek-Boghaz, the famous "Cicilian Gates," a deep gorge between the Bulgar and Allah-daghs, about thirty miles north of Tarsus, throughout which, at an elevation of about 3,300 feet, runs what has in all ages been the great highway from Lesser Asia into Syria and the Euphrates Valley. Through this defile it was that Alexander marched after routing Darius in the plain below; that the Crusaders filed on their long tramp from the Bosphorus; and that Ibrahim Pasha, in 1838-9, twice led his victorious Egyptians into the heart of the peninsula on his way towards Stamboul; (2) that over the Sumak-dagh, a hundred miles farther west, between Mout in the valley of the Kuiuk-su (Calycadanus) and Karaman; (3) that about a hundred and fifty miles west of this again, over the Katran-dagh, between Adalia and Isbarta, through which runs another trunk route from Caramania, through Afioun-Kara-hissar and Kutaya, to Constantinople; and (4) that which leads up from the valley of the Eschen-chai (Xanthus), over the Ak-dagh, to the plain of Cibyra, part of the great upland tract of Phrygia. In the Anti-Taurus, the chief openings from the Black Sea to the interior are those from Ineboli, over the Ilkaz and Ishik-daghs, to Kastamouni and Angora; from Sinope, over the Taushan-dagh to Marsivan and Amasia; from Samsoun also to the latter town, through a defile in the same mountain farther east; and, besides some other breaks of

minor elevation, the three converging passes which traverse the rugged range of the Kolat-dagh, between Trebizond and Gumush-khaneh, on the road to Erzeroum.

The great table-land thus bounded and approached is, as has been said, intersected by numerous minor chains which, together with the two main ranges, form the watershed of several considerable, though geographically only second-rate, rivers and lakes. Of the former, the largest is the Kizil Irmak (Halys), which, after nearly bisecting the peninsula in a very tortuous course of more than 800 miles from its source in the Gemen-Beli-dagh (about seventy miles north-east of Sivas), empties itself into the Black Sea half-way between Sinope and Samsoun. Fifty miles farther east, the Yeshil-Irmak (Iris), which has its source in the same range, enters the Euxine sixteen miles east of the latter town, after passing Tocat and Amasia during a north-westerly course of 240 miles. East of this again, the Melet-Irmak, the Ak-su, the Karshut-chai, and several minor streams, drain the ridges and valleys hence to Trebizond, the extreme north-eastern limit of this great division. West of the Halys no river of any importance is met with on this north coast till we reach the Sakaria (Sangarius), a fine stream, which has its source in the uplands near Angora, whence it runs for some distance under the name of the Engur-su, till, about thirty miles south-east of Bey-bazar, it joins a large affluent that rises eighty miles south-

west of this point in a low range above Eski-Kara-hissar, and to which other authorities give the name of the main stream. Belong this to which it may, from below Bey-bazar the united river runs westwards to near Eski-shehr, beyond which its course is north-west as far as Lefkeh, whence, after nearing the Marmora, in a gorge of the Gök-dagh, it runs nearly due north, and enters the Black Sea about eighty miles east of the Bosphorus. The only streams worth mention which empty themselves into the Marmora are the Edrenos-chai (Rhyndacus) and the Soukourlu-chai (Macestus), which both take their rise in the Demir-dagh, and finally join their currents a few miles before debouching into the sea near the small town of Enikeui. Sixty miles farther west, in the Khoja-chai (Granicus), begin the group of streams which, rising on the slopes of Ida, are, although of no geographical importance, more famed in history and song than any others in the peninsula. On the banks of this river, Alexander gained his first decisive victory over the Persians in B.C. 354, and nearly 300 years later Lucullus equally defeated Mithradates. South of this, outside the Hellespont, the still more famous Meinder-su—"called Xanthus by the gods, and Scamander by men"—rises behind the modern village of Burnabashi (one of the presumed sites of Troy), in the highest part of Ida, and, after being joined by the equally famed Simois and another small affluent, enters the Ægean close to the mouth of the Dardanelles. Below these, south

of Mytilene, the Bakyr-chai (Caicus) rises in the chain of the Demidji-dagh, and after a course of about sixty miles falls into the sea below Pergamus. More important than this is the Ghediz-chai (Hermus) which, after traversing from its source in the Morad-dagh, 200 miles from the sea, the dreary volcanic region of the Katakekaumené, emerges below Adalia into a broad and fertile valley above Sart (Sardis) and Cassaba, receiving near the former the no longer golden-sanded Pactolus, and, passing by Magnesia and Menemen, flows into the Bay of Smyrna ten miles from that city. Next comes the Kutchuk-Meinder or little Mæander (Cayster), rising about seventy miles inland in Mount Tmolus, and, after watering another splendid valley, entering the sea near Scala Nuova, in the gulf of that name, close to Ephesus. Some forty miles farther south, the Buyuk-Meinder (*the* Mæander) debouches through a fine alluvial plain below Miletus, after receiving several affluents, and winding through a series of the wildest mountain gorges in a tortuous course of nearly two hundred and fifty miles from its source in a small lake south of Afioun-Kara-hissar. The whole of these last-mentioned rivers bring down much alluvial matter, and have therefore made great sea deposits. In this way the Hermus has formed a vast bank more than half-way across the Bay of Smyrna, the Cayster has filled up the port of Ephesus to two miles beyond its ancient shore line, and the Mæander has similarly blocked up the harbour of Miletus, and converted the

gulf at this point into a lake. The southern slopes of the Taurus are drained by several rivers of still minor importance to those now named. Of these, the first worth notice east of the Mæander is the Dolomon-chai (Indus), a stream about seventy miles long, which rises in the Baba-dagh and enters the sea nearly opposite the island of Rhodes. Beyond this the Khoja-chai (Xanthus) drains a valley of forty miles from the Kartal-dagh to the sea below the site of the city whence it took its ancient name. Pursuing the coast line up to the Gulf of Adalia, the Ak-su (Gastrus) is next reached, entering the sea a few miles east of the latter town, from its source nearly seventy miles north, below Isbarta; and then, after a long sweep of two hundred miles, the Khiuk-su (Calycadnus), which, more than a hundred miles long, debouches twelve miles below Selevkeh. Beyond, a few miles east of Mersina, the port of Tarsus, the "silver Cydnus" (now called the Tarsus-chai), down which Cleopatra rowed in her gold-and-silken barge to Antony, enters the sea close to the larger Sihun-chai (Carus), which, and the Jihun-chai (Pyramus), the most easterly river of the peninsula, both rise north of the Taurus, and, after piercing it through deep and narrow gorges, enter the sea, the one thirty miles below Adana, and the other near Ayas in the Gulf of Scanderoon. Nearly all these southern rivers have also formed great alluvial bars, and are therefore of but little navigable value. Besides these sea-going streams on three sides of the peninsula, there are

in the interior several others of less volume which drain considerable districts, and disappear through subterranean outlets that have not been traced.

The lakes of Asia Minor, of which there are several, both fresh and salt, are geographically unimportant, and only three or four of the whole need be mentioned. Of the fresh ones, that of Egerdir, 2,800 feet above the sea, is the largest. It lies a few miles north-east of Isbarta, between the range of the Sultan-dagh and the most north-westerly ridges of the Taurus, and measures about thirty miles long by eight or ten broad in its widest part. Lake Bey-shehr, less than forty miles to the south-east of this, and also fresh, lies 800 feet higher, and, like the former, is surrounded by some of the grandest scenery in the peninsula. A hundred miles north-east of this, in the same vilayet of Konia is the Tuz-göl, the largest of the salt lakes, at an elevation of 2,500 feet. This sheet of water, which is about ninety miles in circumference but shallow, is so salt that no fish will live in it, and the thick crust deposited by it is sold and exported in large quantities under a government monopoly. North-westwards, in the pashalic of Brousa, the fresh-water Isnik-göl, a sheet of about fifty miles in circumference, the Aboulonia-göl, rather larger, and the Maniyas-göl all empty their waters into the Marmora through channels ten or a dozen miles long.

Four main and several secondary lines of communication traverse the great tract of country thus

physically distinguished; but none of the whole, except that between Trebizond and Erzeroum, and a short section between Samsoun and Amasia, can be called roads in the European sense. Of the former, only three are now commonly used; the fourth, which was in old times much frequented, being employed only for local traffic and individual travelling. The longest of the four is that which, leaving the Bosphorus at Scutari, skirts the Marmora to Ismid, and nearly parallel with the axis of the peninsula, passes by Boli, Tosia, Mersivan, Amasia, Tocat, Kara-hissar, and Kerkif, to Erzeroum and Kars. Of this route I have myself travelled over only the first and last sections, and am therefore familiar with its intermediate features only at second-hand. Its great length, however, and the facility offered by the sea-passage render it now little used for through transport traffic. A second and much more frequented track starts from the Black Sea at Samsoun and, joining the former at Amasia, leaves it at Tocat, whence, running nearly due south to Sivas, it bifurcates at that town—one branch trending south-westwards to Kaïsarieh, through the Cilician Gates to Tarsus and the Mediterranean at Mersina, and the other proceeding nearly due east through Arabkir and Erzinghan to Erzeroum. A link also runs from Kaïsarieh across the Anatolian watershed to Delikli-tash, Malatiyeh, and Diarbekir. Geographically, the third great route belongs rather to Armenia than to Asia Minor; but as it is more commonly credited to

the latter, it may be here so included. This, which runs from Trebizond to Erzeroum—so far over a fair carriageable road—Bayazid, and the Persian frontier a few miles beyond, has been the track along which the great transit traffic between Iran and the Euxine has almost immemorially passed. I have ridden thrice over this road as far as Erzeroum, four times over that between Erzeroum and Kars, and once to Bayazid, besides making a subsequent journey into Persia by way of Van and Kotour; but some description of the whole will be more fittingly included in a notice of Armenia than given here. The fourth great trunk route, like the second and third, is diagonal; but, instead of the north-eastern, it cuts off the south-western corner of the peninsula. This is the line from the Marmora by Broussa, Kutaya, Ak-shehr, Konia, Eregli, through the Taurus also, by the pass of the Cilician Gates to Adana, and thence round the Gulf of Scanderoon to Alexandretta. Formerly, in Byzantine and Seljuk times, this route was much frequented, but, as above remarked, it is now little used except for local purposes. The more important of the secondary roads are (1) that from Smyrna by way of Tireh, Aïdin, and Denizlu to Adalia; (2) what may be called the loop-line track from the same port through Cassaba and Ushak to trunk route No. 4 at Afioun-kara-hissar; that which, branching from the Scutari and Ismid line at Sabandja, a few miles east of the latter town, passes through Torbali and Bey-bazar to Angora; and (4)

the more roundabout road from Isnik, *viâ* Eski-shehr and Sivri-hissar to the same centre, whence continuations run on north-eastwards to Tocat, and south-eastwards to Kaïsarieh.

The geology of this great peninsula is nearly as varied as its other physical features, consisting in the upper regions of granite, serpentine, and schist, and in the lower chiefly of limestone. In the east trachytic rocks abound, overlaid towards the centre by black volcanic breccia interspersed with angular blocks of trachyte; while westward the formation is almost wholly calcareous. The most curious feature, however, in the whole of these is the volcanic region of the Katakekaumene[1] already mentioned, which extends from below Konia up north-east to beyond Kaïsarieh, and the frequent earthquakes within which still attest the continuance of igneous action.

Owing to the diversity of its surface elevations, the climate of Asia Minor admits of no general description. In all ages its western shores have been celebrated for their genial warmth, while their greatest

[1] Mr. Hamilton's description of this dreariest district in the peninsula may be here quoted:—"West of us, a black dome-shaped hill of scoriæ and ashes, the Kara-derbit, or 'black ink-stand,' the volcano of Koula, rose about 500 feet above the plain, and was so steep that to ascend its slope of cinders seemed wholly impossible. In front, a black rugged stream of lava extended from right to left: the surface of which, broken up into a thousand forms, looked like breakers of a sea converted into stone amid the fury of a gale, and forming, as it issued from the base of the cone, a striking contrast with the rich plain through which it seemed to flow."—*Researches in Asia Minor*, i. p. 136.

summer heat ranges from between 84° to 100° Fahr., with only a slight rainfall, which is however compensated by heavy night dews. The northern coast is almost equally favoured as to temperature, and enjoys besides the advantage of frequent rains all through the year. But at some few points in the neighbourhood of Trebizond the effects of alternate heat and moisture produce malaria in the autumn, during which most of the inhabitants take shelter in the neighbouring mountains. The high table-land of the interior is extremely cold in winter, but healthy withal. The summer here is of short duration, and snow lies deep for nearly four months of the twelve. Southwards, the climate of Caramania, unlike that of the Black Sea coast, is oppressively hot in summer, with but little rain; and hence from April to November the inhabitants are chiefly dependent on tanks and cisterns for their water supply. Many marshy spots towards the eastern extremity also engender bad fevers after the extreme summer heat, which, as on the north-eastern coast, force all who can afford the temporary migration to seek refuge on the wooded mountain slopes inland. In the passes of the Taurus, the cold during winter is intense. Eastwards, the same extremes of summer heat and winter cold which characterise the climate of Armenia prevail from the Gulf of Scanderoon to Trebizond, except near the two extremities of this distance, where both are moderated by the milder temperature of the sea.

As most of the forty or more islands and islets which compose the TURKISH ARCHIPELAGO, though administratively distinct from Asia Minor, geographically and historically belong to it, it will be convenient here to append some notice of the chief members of the group.[1] The whole form the separate government of Jezaïr, or the Isles, the vali of which resides at Rhodes.

Thasos, Samothrace, and Imbros, the three most northerly islands, are rather Thracian than Asiatic, and may be dismissed therefore in a line or two. The first lies some miles off Cavalla, and though rich in the historic interest that attaches to nearly all these Ægean isles, now possesses but little economic value. After feeding a scanty population of 6,000 Greeks, its barren soil affords little for export except fir timber from the forests which clothe a dorsal range of hills that culminate in a peak 3,400 feet high. Samothrace, thirty-five miles to the south-east, and anciently famous as the seat of the mysterious worship of the Cabeiri, is smaller, and contributes even less to the neighbouring trade; while Imbros, lying ten miles off the Thracian Chersonese, with a sparse population of 3,000 Greeks, exports nothing whatever,

[1] Anciently called the Sporades (scattered), as distinguished from the Cyclades, or those lying in a circle round Delos, which were given by the Powers to Greece, on the formation of the new kingdom in 1828. These last comprise all the islands situated between the 36th and 39th degrees of latitude, and between the Continent and longitude 26° of the meridian of Greenwich.

and is now chiefly visited for its autumnal abundance of small game.

The real Anatolian archipelago begins with *Lemnos*, which, with an area of nearly 150 square miles, supports a chiefly Greek population of 12,000, who produce and export to the Dardanelles considerable quantities of corn, grapes and figs. The old fame of its women for beauty, and of its men for seamanship, is still well sustained. Nearly thirty miles due east lies Homeric *Tenedos*, separated by a narrow channel of five miles from the Troad, and from its nearness to the mouth of the Dardanelles, maintaining an importance out of proportion to its diminutive size of less than a dozen miles round. Though much of its surface is rugged, it supports a population of 5,000, of whom about a third are Turks, and the remainder Greeks. Its only exports are wood, and an excellent red wine much drunk in Smyrna and Constantinople.

Thirty miles further south, midway between the Hellespont and the Gulf of Smyrna, *Mytilene*, of voluptuous and poetic fame, the country of Sappho and Alcæus, and in later times the birthplace of Barbarossa, is the finest island in the Turkish Ægean. Whether as first seen on approaching it from the coast of Greece, or more closely on its eastern side in passing through the narrow strait that separates it from the mainland of Asia Minor, it well merits the epithet of "noble and pleasant." On the one side, vegetation stretches up from the coast-line to

the dense forests of pine that clothe the central mountain chain to its summit; and on the other miles of olive-groves and admirably-kept gardens, dotted with picturesque villages, belt the whole shore from north to south. In this respect the scenery round Kastion, the chief town, on the eastern side of the island, is unique in the Levant. Although much fallen from its ancient prosperity, Mytilene has still a population of nearly 60,000, for the most part Greeks, and being in the direct line of steam communication, carries on a considerable export trade, chiefly in figs and olive-oil. The size of the island is about thirty-three miles long by twenty-six broad.—*Psyra*, a small, barren, and mountainous islet west of Scio, is noteworthy only as the scene of one of the most heroic and sanguinary episodes of the Revolutionary War, in which more than 3,000 of its own inhabitants, twice as many refugees from the mainland of Asia, and 4,000 Turks promiscuously perished.—*Scio* itself, longer but narrower than Mytilene, and classically as famous, is also chiefly memorable in modern times as the theatre of a massacre (in 1822) still more terrible than that of Psyra, provoked also by its inhabitants joining the national rebellion. The island has, however, recovered most of its old prosperity, and its leading families now again stand at the head of Greek commerce and finance throughout the Levant. Its exceptional position as an appanage of the Sultan's mother long protected it from the oppression which weighed heavily on most of the other islands,

and, in return for a yearly supply of mastic to the imperial harem, and a moderate capitation tax, left its inhabitants practically free to govern themselves. These privileges survived the massacre of 1822, but were abolished in 1866, since which Scio has shared in the general administrative good or bad luck—according to the character of the vali for the time being—of the rest of the Archipelago. Besides mastic, it exports considerable quantities of cocoons, lemons, oranges, oil, and wine,—but this last is no longer the generous nectar immortalized by Horace. The present population of the island is about 65,000, of whom more than 60,000 are Greeks, about 2,000 Turks, and the rest Jews and Franks of various nationalities.—*Samos*, which differs in its relation to the Porte from the whole of the other islands—being, as will be described in a subsequent chapter, merely tributary to Stamboul, and administratively autonomous under a Christian "Prince" named by the Sultan—is separated from the mainland a few miles below Scala Nuova, the port of Ephesus, by a strait,[1] only a mile wide at its narrowest. This fine island, which was famous in antiquity as the centre of Ionian luxury and art, as the birthplace of many renowned philosophers, artists, and poets, and for its extraordinary fertility, is still one of the most productive in the Ægean.

[1] The straits of Mycale, the scene of the defeat of the Persians in B.C. 479: it is now called the Kutchuk (or little) Boghaz, in contradistinction to the channel between Samos and Icaria, which is called the Buyuk (or great) Boghaz.

Though less than thirty miles in length by an average breadth of eight, it annually exports large quantities of corn, grapes, oil, valonea, and other produce, besides an excellent muscadel wine which, when sufficiently aged, is little inferior to Tokay. The Samians shared in the Greek rebellion, and maintained their liberty during the war, but at its close were forced by the allied Powers to re-accept the dominion, or rather the suzerainty of the Porte. Its two principal towns are Khora and Vathy, respectively on the south and north sides, and its population now numbers about 34,000, all Greeks, except some 300 Moslems and the small Turkish garrison. Less than four miles due west lies *Icaria*, about half the size of Samos, with a rude population of 8,000, who live chiefly by charcoal-burning and the exportation of firewood to the neighbouring islands and the Asiatic mainland. A score of miles below these, and nearly in the fairway of vessels using this much frequented passage from the Dardanelles to Syria and Egypt, is bleak and barren *Patmos*, the scene of the Apocalyptic visions, a rocky mass now called Patmo, on which clusters a population of about 4,000 Greeks, still of evil repute, even in a neighbourhood in which bad reputations have long been the rule. The monastery built in the twelfth century over the traditional grotto in which the Apostle penned his revelations, is immediately subject to the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, and is exempt from other episcopal visitation. As far

again south, past the islets of Lipso and Leros, lies *Calymno*, no longer "*silvis umbrosa*," as in Ovid's time, but still famous for its wine, oil, and especially its honey, the production of which, together with the sponge fishery, supports 7,000 inhabitants, here again all Greeks.—*Cos*, next reached, and historically as famed as any that precedes, is, after Mytilene, the most picturesque island in the Ægean. It is more than double the size of Calymno, being sixty miles in circuit, but only about a third of its surface is arable. This, however, produces in abundance corn, silk, oil, wine, and all the fruits of the Levant. The present population of the island is about 16,000, of whom all but a few are Greeks.

Rhodes, the metropolitan island of the group, lies nearly sixty miles further south-east, and only twelve miles from the nearest point of the Caramanian mainland. In modern history this is the most interesting insular dependency of the Porte. Its siege and capture by the Turks under Solyman the Magnificent, in 1522, from the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, form one of the grandest episodes in the annals both of that famous Order and of the Ottoman dynasty.[1] The island has an area of about four hundred and

[1] The generous conqueror acknowledged the heroism of the defence by allowing the knights to depart in their own galleys, with the whole of their military and private effects, accompanied by as many of the inhabitants as chose to leave the island. They retired first to Crete and then to Sicily, whence in 1530, they removed to Malta, then ceded to them by the Emperor Charles V.

twenty square miles, of which, however, much is mountainous, and a large part of the arable remainder is now out of cultivation. In the present decadence of its agriculture, it grows barely corn enough for local consumption, but exports considerable quantities of wax, honey, oil, and various fruits. The actual population is under 40,000, of whom 15,000 inhabit the greatly reduced and ruined capital,[1] while some forty-five villages absorb the rest. Except 6,000 Turks and about 2,000 Jews, the whole are Greeks, industrious and temperate, but—thanks to a priesthood nearly as illiterate as the peasants—at the very lowest educational ebb. Decadent, however, in every respect though the island now is, it still possesses all the elements of great industrial and commercial prosperity, and needs only—the one general need throughout Archipelago and mainland alike—good government to restore it to its old level of wealth and civilisation.

Two hundred and forty miles still farther east, lying across the mouth of the Gulf of Scanderoon,

[1] Most of the architectural remains of the Knights, whose occupation of the island extended from A.D. 1384 to 1522, were destroyed by the explosion of a powder-magazine in the ancient quarter of the town in 1856. My second of three visits to the island was paid a few weeks after this disaster, when the 600 or more human victims of the accident had been collected and buried, but all else remained nearly as the explosion had left it. What escaped that calamity was further devastated by an earthquake in 1862, which left standing only a few of the most massive buildings in the Street of the Knights.

and nearly equidistant from Caramania and Syria, CYPRUS, our own recent acquisition, completes the list of these insular dependencies of Asia Minor. Though I have twice visited this island, and am more familiar with it than any other of the group except Rhodes and Mytilene, so much has lately been written about it that I will here offer only the briefest note of its physical aspect and present material condition. With an area of 4,500 square miles, it ranks after Sicily and Sardinia as the third largest island in the Mediterranean. Great part of its surface is occupied by two nearly parallel mountain ranges, running from west to east, the southernmost and higher of which culminates in the peak of Mount Olympus, now called Troödos, with an elevation of 6,600 feet. Between these lies the great plain of Messaria, extending across the island from the bay of Famagousta on the east to that of Morphu on the west, about sixty miles long, and varying from ten to twenty in breadth. But here again misgovernment has discouraged industry, and the greater part of this fine tract is now mere bare and barren downs; for the forests which once clothed both mountain and plain have been wholly cleared of the latter, and only the higher slopes and summits of the former still retain their covering of pines. This disappearance of trees has in turn seriously affected the hydrological, and with that the sanitary, condition of the island. What were formerly rivers that regularly drained whole districts

throughout the year, are now mere winter torrents, dry in summer, but leaving stagnant marshes along their course which spread fevers far and wide. The island was also anciently famous for its minerals, especially copper, but of these none are now worked, and even the sites of the old mines have disappeared. Salt is, however, still produced in large quantities from "pans," near Larnaca and Limasol; but even on that the fiscal restrictions have been so heavy as to practically veto its export. The chief towns are—Nicosia, the administrative capital, inland; Famagousta, on the east coast, near the ruins of Salamis, and celebrated for its heroic defence against the Turks in 1571; Larnaca, farther south on the same side, and now the residence of the foreign consuls, and the chief place of trade in the island; Limasol, on the south coast; Baffo, or Papho, near the ruins of Paphos, on the south-west; and Tzerini, on the north coast, which serves as the port of communication with Asia Minor. All the harbours of the island are bad. Larnaca and Limasol are mere open roadsteads; and Famagousta, the chief port under the Venetians, is only an artificial haven on an open sandy coast. They suffice, however, for the diminished trade, the exports of which now comprise only inconsiderable quantities of wine, oil, madder, goat-skins, the fruit of the carob tree, and small parcels of silk and wool. The mixed population of Greeks and Syrians, which during the Venetian occupation (1487—1571) was estimated at nearly

1,000,000, has now dwindled to less than 120,000,[1] the women of whom—as becomes the compatriots of Venus—are the handsomest, as they are said to be the frailest, in the Levant. Two great massacres, following revolts in 1764 and 1823, and surpassing in sanguinary ferocity those of Psyra and Scio, in part account for this decrease of population, but administrative misrule and neglect have yet more contributed to this result. Still, like Rhodes, Samos, Scio, Mytilene, and indeed all the larger islands of the group, Cyprus is rich in most of the elements of great material prosperity, possessing for the most part an intelligent, homogeneous, and industrious population, varied and abundant natural resources, and easy communication with the great commercial centres of the West. Yet, notwithstanding all these advantages, the actual state of the island has been well described as—till our occupation of it—"neglected by capitalists, unvisited by tourists, and useless to the world." For this, Turkish misrule has alone been to blame. In Ottoman hands, the history of the whole Archipelago, as of the adjoining continent, has been a mere record of continuous decline. In ours, Cyprus at least—with all its artificially induced disadvantages of climate—may soon be expected to rival the prosperity, though never the beauty, of Corfu before our ill-advised surrender of the Ionian group to Greece. I presume,

[1] Of whom about 80,000 are Greeks, 20,000 Mussulmans, and the remainder Armenians, Catholic Franks, and Syrian Arabs.

of course, to offer no opinion on the special strategical value which is supposed to have determined our choice of the island ; but, unless this be something much greater than civilian common sense can apprehend, I own to regret that we did not choose Rhodes or Mytilene instead. The latter especially would have been a *tête de ligne* for commanding influence over the Dardanelles and all Asia Minor, while Cyprus is hardly nearer to the Hellespont than Malta, and commands nothing that an ordinary squadron did not equally safeguard before.[1]

[1] Crete, 300 miles west of Cyprus, lies properly outside the Archipelago, and, though politically still subject to the Porte, belongs both geographically and geologically rather to the Morea than to Asia Minor. It forms, too, a separate and privileged government from that of the Isles, but no amount of constitutional concession has availed to win its Christian population from a state of chronic revolt in favour of annexation to Greece.

CHAPTER III.

ARMENIA AND KURDISTAN.

Limits of Turkish *Armenia*—Its configuration—Rivers—The Euphrates and Tigris—Main routes—Personal journey from Trebizond to Erzeroum—To Bayazid—Erzeroum to Kars—Situation and aspect of the latter fortress—Journey to Van—Kurdish hospitality—Lake Van—Voyage across—Story of Sheikh Abdullah —*Kurdistan*—Its chief physical features—Climate—Principal products.

In many of their physical, as of their ethical, features, these two sections, though usually bracketed together, differ as widely from each other as both do from Asia Minor. So much of the former as is still left to Turkey lies up in the north-eastern corner of the empire, and includes about a third of the old area of Greater and Lesser Armenia, which extended from the Caspian eastward to Asia Minor in the west. The present boundaries of Turkish Armenia are the Black Sea on the north;[1] Trans-Caucasia—extended

[1] The district along the coast eastwards from Trebizond to the new boundary beyond Khopah, and for some thirty miles inland is called Lazistan, from Lazis, the name of its people, and

by the late war to the range of the Soghanli-dagh, and thence in a curving border-line inclosing Olti to the Euxine between Khopa and Batoum—on the north-east, and east as far as Bayazid; Persia thence down to a point between Van and Kotour; southwards Kurdistan; and on the west, Asia Minor. The greater part of its area, like that of Anatolia, consists of an elevated table-land ranging from about 4,000 to 7,000 feet above the sea, and culminating in Mount Ararat, which—just within the Russian border—forms the junction-point of the three empires. It is, however, even more mountainous and volcanic than the western division, having within its much smaller area no fewer than four principal ranges (with many offshoots from each) which connect the Caucasian system with the Taurus, the Anti-Taurus, and the main chain of Kurdistan. But only a few of the highest peaks rise above the line of perpetual snow, and there are no passes that may not be traversed in a single day. The country is, however, much less wooded[1] than Asia Minor, and being for the most

is ethnically quite distinct from Armenia, but geographically it belongs to the latter, and must here be so regarded. Administratively, what is left of it to Turkey since the cession of Batoum, belongs to the vilayet of Trebizond.

[1] In consequence of this deficiency of wood, the staple fuel of the lower classes consists of cattle droppings gathered and kneaded into flat cakes, called *tezek*, similar to the *gileh* of the Egyptian fellahs. From May till the commencement of the snow-fall in October, these may be seen plastered by thousands outside the cabin walls and flat roofs of every village throughout the country, sun-drying for winter use.

part abundantly watered, its numerous valleys and plateaux teem with nearly every kind of cereal, fruit, and flower vegetation possible in such a climate; for this last includes almost the extremes of heat and cold, with a temperate mean, however, during the short spring and autumn months. Winter begins in October and lasts till May, and during nearly the whole of this long interval the country is mantled in snow, in many places several feet deep, and all field-work is suspended. In summer, on the other hand, the heat in the higher plains is excessive;[1] and as but little rain falls during these torrid ten or a dozen weeks, long before their close the whole face of the land becomes as scorched and brown as if swept by a sirocco. In respect of both heat and cold, the difference between the coast districts and the uplands of the interior is very great. Thus at Erivan (in Russian Armenia), which is 1° lat. south of Trebizond, the thermometer in winter falls 36° Fahr. lower, and in summer rises 24° higher than at the latter town; and on the plateaux of Erzeroum and Gumri the difference from the temperature of the seaboard is still more marked.

Three considerable, and two great, rivers have their sources in this division. Of the former, the most

[1] The hottest sun I ever felt in the East was during the month of July, on a ride from Erzeroum to Kars. Having at the time no thermometer, I could not measure the actual degrees, but the blazing rays surpassed in fierceness anything I ever before or afterwards experienced, either on the Lower Tigris or in Upper Egypt during portions of the hot season in both.

important is the Arras (Araxes), which rises in the Bin-göl-dagh, twenty miles below Erzeroum, and flows nearly south-east till it leaves Turkey a few miles north-west of Ararat, and then eastwards in a rapid but varying course of nearly 500 miles, till it joins the Kûr (Cyrus) and enters the Caspian at Salian, about midway between Resht and Baku. The Kûr itself rises in the mountains near Ardahan, and entering Georgia at Akhaltsik, runs south-east through Tiflis to its junction with the Arras and debouchure into the Caspian at the same point. The Yorak has its source in the hills south of Baibourt, and, passing this latter town, flows behind the range that divides Armenia proper from Lazistan, as far as Atvin, whence it turns northwards and empties into the Black Sea a few miles south-west of Batoum.

All three of these rivers, however, are mere mountain streams compared with the Euphrates and Tigris, both of which—though they only attain their full volume much farther south—have their rise in this fabled cradle of mankind.[1] The "great river" springs from two sources more than 120 miles apart—the one being about twenty-five miles north-east of Erzeroum, and the other in the southern slopes of the Allah-dagh below Bayazid. Under the very common name of the Kara-su (black water),

[1] A very full statement of the argument for placing the Garden of Eden in central Armenia will be found in Chesney's *Expedition to the Euphrates and Tigris*, i. 266—82.

the former (the westernmost) branch for nearly 270 miles in a tortuous south-westerly course to near Keban-maden, a few miles above Kharpout, where it is joined by the eastern and larger arm, called the Murad-chai—more than 100 miles farther still from its source; and the double stream then runs for some sixty miles farther south, till it forces a passage through the Upper Taurus near Arghana, and under the one name of the Frât, rolls down in a broad and rapid volume on its far way to the Gulf. The second and only other great river of Asiatic Turkey, the Tigris (Dijleh), also springs from two sources, the westernmost of which is about ten miles south of the little Guljik (or Kharpout) lake, flowing whence past Diarbekir it joins the eastern branch (which rises some eight miles north of Bitlis) near Findouk, and thence past Mosul and down to below the Lesser Zab forms. the western boundary of Kurdistan. Zig-zagging some 180 miles farther south, it bisects Baghdad within twenty miles of the Euphrates, with which it finally merges at Kurnah, and, as the Shat-el-Arab, the two great streams then flow together for another 120 miles to the Gulf at Faô.

Of the three or four routes which traverse Armenia, that from Trebizond to Erzeroum and the Persian frontier at Bayazid is the only one of first-class importance. It is usually reckoned amongst the great trunk roads of Asia Minor, but in strict geography it lies outside that division, and claims notice more

appropriately here. Having, as already mentioned, made the journey from the coast to Erzeroum and back twice, and once from the latter city to Bayazid, I may perhaps best describe the chief features of the whole by transcribing the notes of the first of those personal essays in Asiatic travel.

From Trebizond the road runs immediately up and over the Boz-tepé, the last mountain spur nearest the sea, on the northern slope of which the town is built, and thence through the well-cultivated valley of Deirmen-deré on for a dozen or fifteen miles farther to Jevizlik, a village on the bank of a small stream where diverge the three routes—only one of which is practicable in winter, *i.e.* from the end of October to the end of April—that lead through as many passes over the rugged range of the Kolat-dagh. Our party, on this first journey, chose that to Ziganeh, and soon ascended into the midst of the grandest Alpine scenery, the road at one time narrowing into little more than a goat's track along the edge of precipitous cliffs, at another dipping to the margin of a boulder-blocked torrent that rushed noisily through the gorge at their base. Although it was nearly mid-May, the snow still lay heavy on the higher peaks, but immediately below the line at which it ended dense forests of oak, beech, and pine, clothed the mountain sides down to the bottom of the ravine, alternating with wild and desolate plateaux on which stunted evergreens and a species of yellow-flowered honeysuckle formed the only vege-

tation, except where cleared patches—surrounding picturesque clusters of châlet-like cabins with sloping shingle roofs—bloomed with thick crops of ripening wheat and maize. Beyond the deep ravine of Stavros-boghaz, the track again ascends, and crosses the ridge of the Khouroush-dagh into the pretty vale of Gumush-khaneh, which abounds in the finest orchards and gardens, and is as famous for its pears as for its neighbouring silver mines. On the second afternoon out, while climbing the steep ascent that leads from this charming valley to the higher table-land of Baibourt, we suddenly came on the naked body of a man lying right across the road at a precipitous turn which a projecting spur of rock narrowed to the width of six or eight feet. On moving the ghastly obstruction out of the way, it was found to be still half warm—killed by a single gunshot in the back. At the next post-house, half-a-dozen miles farther on, we learned that the body was that of one of three Persians who had slept in this *menzil-khaneh* the previous night, on their way to Trebizond, and that on reaching the spot where we found it, they had been fired on by brigands from behind the rock, with the result of one being killed and a second wounded. The latter and his untouched companion had managed to escape back to the post-house, and were there when we arrived. News of the outrage had already been sent on to Baibourt, and during the night a picquet of mounted police arrived, escorted by a portion of whom we and the Persians reached

that town the following afternoon. Baibourt is an unwalled town of some 6,000 inhabitants, on the banks of the Yorak, here an inconsiderable stream. Its only architectural remains are the ruins of an old Genoese castle on the craggy summit of the hill, along the base of which it lies. Thence we proceeded early next morning, still upwards over the low range of the Coph-dagh into the great undulating plateau of Erzeroum, which we finally reached without further adventure on the afternoon of the fifth day, crossing the western branch of the Euphrates (Kara-su) within three or four miles of the town. The whole distance from Trebizond is about 200 miles, fully two-thirds of which are over the most rugged mountain ground, ascending gradually to an elevation of nearly 7,000 feet above the sea. Only about a dozen miles of the carriageable road, since completed over the whole route, were then made—at a cost, it was said, of nearly £100,000 for the section!

From Erzeroum to Bayazid, the route first traverses the low bare range of the Devi-boyun into the well-watered plain of Hassan-kaleh, eighteen miles on the way to Kars, and then, turning due east, crosses the Aras and winds through the rugged defiles of the Kosh-dagh up past Toprak-kaleh to the fine plains of Pasin and Arisghird, and so through Eutch-kilisseh and Diadeen to Bayazid, almost within the shadow of solitary and snow-capped Ararat, and only five miles from the frontier point at which the

Persian caravans enter Turkey.[1] As Bayazid itself is of small commercial importance, except as being close to the transit station near which the three frontiers meet, and as the junction point of another route from Van and the rich districts round its lake, a few words will suffice for its description. The town hangs romantically on the side of a rugged cliff that rises some distance above it, and is capped by an old ruined citadel, a well-built mosque, and the Pasha's *konak*, or palace. The present population is about 6,000, of whom nearly three-fourths are Kurds, and the remainder Armenians and Turks. The place was captured by the Russians in the wars of 1828-9, and 1854-6, and again in the campaign of 1877, but was restored to the Turks by the Treaty of Berlin. It is about 150 miles east of Erzeroum, 100 south of Kars—to which I subsequently rode from it—and about ninety north-east of Van; but as the roads to all three are far from direct, the travelling distance in each case is considerably more.

The roads next in order of importance to this great trunk route, are those from Erzeroum to Kars, and from the same town to Van *viâ* Yangali and Tashkoun. As I have also traversed both of these, the former four times, and the latter once, a brief personal note of the two journeys may similarly serve for their

[1] Bayazid itself lies some seven miles north of the actual caravan road, about midway between Diadeen and the Persian village of Aivajik, where the frontier is crossed.

description. To both termini, as to Bayazid, the first stage is the same—that to Hassan-kaleh, a small town built along the base of a spur that juts out from the mountain range that flanks the plain of Pasin on the north. This again is crowned with an old Genoese castle, worthless of course against modern cannon, but which as a ruin—for though garrisoned, when I visited it, by half a battalion of troops and armed with a few old smooth-bore guns, it is little better than a ruin—forms as picturesque a feature as any landscapist could choose to sketch. Past this, the road to Kars crosses the Aras a few miles farther on, at Keupri-keui, by a fine old Persian bridge of ten arches, of which two, having partly fallen in, were patched up with wood. A long ride over an undulating upland intervenes between this and Vezin-keui, a village nestled in a deep gorge under another rocky spur capped with the ruined keep of some last-century Derè-Bey; and a few miles beyond begins the ascent of the Soghanli-dagh, up and over which the track winds through a dense forest of pines that, distant as it is, supplies Erzeroum with most of its wood fuel. Half-way down the opposite long and rugged slope, Kars becomes visible, some twenty miles off across a rich meadow-land that stretches away past the famous fortress to what was, till last year, the Georgian border, five-and-twenty miles beyond. A little more than three hours' canter, during which a couple of small streams are forded, and several villages passed—brought us to

the town gates, close within which is the dirty *menzil-khaneh,* or post-house, that shelters equally the traveller's horse and himself. The whole distance from Erzeroum is 108 miles, but as fully half of this is over rough mountain road, the journey, even travelling "post"—*i.e.* with horses changed at intervals of five or six hours—usually occupies from two-and-a-half to three days.[1] Of Kars itself, which has been so often described by pen and pencil during the late war, it will here suffice to say that it lies

[1] One of my three subsequent rides over it, however, was made in thirteen hours. I had gone out to the village of Hadjiveli-keui, eighteen miles beyond Kars, when late one night a courier arrived with a pressing summons from the Consul at Erzeroum, urging me to hurry down at once if I wished to see alive a friend who was to have accompanied me to the frontier. Accordingly, an hour after midnight I started for Kars, arrived there about 4 A.M., took post-horses, and changing these three or four times during the day, reached Erzeroum shortly after 6 P.M.—only to learn that poor B. had been buried three hours before. On this occasion I narrowly escaped supplying a meal to the half-jackal dogs of Erzeroum. Having ridden on ahead of my servant and the *surredjee* as we neared the town, I missed my way in the darkness in winding through an old cemetery in the outskirts, and, instead of following the proper track, rode down into a hollow that formed a *cul-de-sac* in which many scores of the town curs congregated nightly. They at once attacked the horse and myself, and before I could draw my revolver and empty it amongst them, they had badly bitten the poor animal on the neck and both flanks, and torn the long jack boots which fortunately protected my own feet and legs. The sound of the pistol shots guided my companions to the rescue, but it was only by thus dividing the attack and by the vigorous use of the *surredjee's* whip, and of an old cavalry sabre worn by my servant, that the pack was beaten off, and we regained the right road.

on the west side of the long plain just mentioned, in the semi-circular bend made by the little river Kars-chai as it issues from a narrow gorge of the Childir range in its course to join the Arpa-chai, which, some twenty miles to the north-east, formed, till the late cession to Russia, the boundary between Turkish Armenia and Georgia. The north-west side of the fortress is protected by a ledge of bold and naturally scarped rocks that rises abruptly from the right bank of the stream, and the three other sides by a massive stone wall flanked by square towers. The citadel, which stands on the ledge of rock mentioned, and dominates the town, is an old Genoese structure, perhaps the grandest relic of the energy and industry of those intrepid adventurers now to be found in the East. An adjoining ridge, called the Kara-dagh, commands both the castle and town, within musket shot from the opposite side of a deep ravine; and in the campaigns of 1854–6, and last year, batteries on this height played an important part in the defence of the place.

Turning sharp across the plain from Hassan-kaleh to the south-east, the track to Van passes through a deep ravine, and crosses the range of the Bin-göl-dagh, in the valley beyond which the Aras is forded at a point near where Xenophon and his Ten Thousand are supposed to have passed the stream on their long march to the Euxine. A wide undulating valley of great fertility, and thickly dotted with villages, is then traversed, till the eastern branch

of the Euphrates (Murad-chai) is similarly forded at the Kurdish village of Yangali, beyond which the population is sparser, and the only cultivation seen is in patches immediately round the few villages met with during the next fifty or sixty miles. Hereabouts we passed several encampments of nomad Kurds, whom the abundance of pasture and water attracts down from the hills during autumn and winter. The evil repute of these gentry made us shy of approaching their low black tents; but the chief of one group near which the road passed, advanced, and, with a courtesy that could hardly have been excelled by a Stamboulee Turk, invited us to dismount and rest awhile under his large tent. The outer of the two compartments of which this consisted was furnished with felt rugs and cushions spread on reed matting, squatted on and against which we were entertained with a capital meal of fresh flap-bread, *yaourt* (thickened sour milk), honey, and water melons,—our host expressing what seemed to be honest regret that he had not had notice of our coming, in which case he would have killed a lamb in honour of the *beg-zadehs.* The matting curtain between the outer and inner divisions of the tent being looped up, we had a full view of this last, which served both as harem, kitchen, and stable. Three or four unveiled women and children were bustling about with seemingly complete indifference to the presence and scrutiny of the strangers, and two fine horses of the hardy Kurdish breed were

munching grass and chopped straw in another corner. After a halt of more than an hour, we resumed our journey, escorted by the Agha for some distance beyond the encampment, where he took leave of us with many a hearty *oörooghlar-olsun* (may good fortune attend you). We thought of Abraham and the angels, and felt that the Patriarch could hardly have treated his celestial visitors with more cordial grace than had been shown by this rude Kurdish chief to a couple of very mundane *ghiaours.* After spending the night in a dirty Armenian village some hours beyond the scene of this hospitable episode, we next morning ascended the rugged Sipan-dagh, from the top of which we first sighted the Great Lake, lying far below in the centre of a magnificent valley, girdled on three sides by densely wooded mountains, whose forests of firs, chestnut, beech, walnut, and ash—with, along our own particular track, an abundant undergrowth of tamarinds, oleanders, myrtles, and other flowering shrubs—run down to and merge in the broad belt of gardens and melon-grounds that fringe most of the shore-line as far as the eye can reach. Descending the long slope, and winding for some distance through groves of plum, apricot, peach, fig, and pomegranate trees, festooned with thick runners of clustering vine, we struck the lake at Aldijivas, a dilapidated but picturesque old town, half hid in this splendid vegetation, and were hospitably received and lodged in a house next his own by the mudir, a Turk from Stamboul.

This great sheet of water is the largest in all Asiatic Turkey, being seventy miles long by twenty-eight broad. It lies at an elevation of nearly 2,000 feet above the sea, and contains several very beautiful islands, one of which (Agthamar) is the residence of one of the four patriarchs of the Armenian Church, in a massive old monastery which is held in great veneration by members of that communion. The climate of this delightful spot is as temperate as its sky is generally serene, and altogether the whole district for miles round the lake is, by the common testimony of travellers, one of the loveliest in any part of Asia, and worthy accordingly of its place within the supposed limits of Paradise. As the Andalusians say of Seville—

> "Quien no ha visto Sevilla
> No ha visto maravilla,"

so the Vanlees express a similar boast of the landscape, climatic, and other attractions of their own city and its neighbourhood, in the local proverb of *Duniada Van, khăreeh imaut* ("in this world Van, in the next salvation"). As the distance from Aldijivas to the city by land is nearly eighty miles, we gladly accepted the offer of the mudir to send us across in his boat, a rudely built craft of some ten tons, used for carrying produce between the two places. We embarked in the evening, so as to reach Van early next day; but the wind having freshened a few hours later, the *reïs* insisted on

running for shelter under the lee of the island on which the monastery stands. Here we landed, but the patriarch and his monks were too holy to be hospitable, and refused to even open their gate. Soon after sunrise, therefore, we again got under weigh, but our old tub sailed so badly that it was late in the afternoon of the sixth day out from Erzeroum before we crawled into the little creek that forms the port of the town. This latter lies a couple of miles inland from the lake, in a plain more than forty miles in circuit, thickly studded with villages, and clothed everywhere with the most luxurious vegetation. The town itself clusters round the base of a lofty ridge of rock that rises 500 feet sheer out of the plain, and is split by deep artificial fissures, on each of which stands what was once, and might again be made, a strong fortification. On the north side three tiers of wall and bastions only need repair to render an escalade in that direction impossible; while on the south the perpendicular face of the rock is naturally still more impregnable, and as it is commanded by no other height its garrison could only be reduced by blockade. The town below is defended by a mud and stone wall of no military value, but which suffices for protection against the raids of Kurdish banditti, by whom it was formerly not seldom attacked. Its present population is about 15,000, mostly Armenians and Turks, with only a few Kurds. The strategic value of the place lies in the fact that it forms the junction point of

two important routes which here bifurcate—the one westwards through Moush and Kharpout into Anatolia, and the other southwards to Mosul and the lower Tigris and Euphrates valleys. Its occupation would also militarily command the neighbouring Persian province of Azerbijan, the principal towns of which, Khoï and Tabreez, are respectively within an easy week's and ten days' march, with crude brick walls for their only defence.

During a week's halt at Van, we made numerous short excursions in the neighbourhood, and, amongst other spots, visited the once famous, but now dilapidated *turbèh* (tomb) of a very holy sheikh of the Dervish order of the Kadirees, as to which our Armenian host and companion, during the visit, told the following irreverent story:—Many years ago, the original guardian of the tomb, by name Sheikh Ali, had been the disciple of a very holy dervish, called Abdullah, who kept watch over the mausoleum of a much venerated santon, near Konia. Abdullah was a Seyd, or at least wore the green turban of the sacred caste; but his pupil, having no claim to such high descent, wore the common head-gear of their order. Served by this holy couple, the Konia tomb had become one of the most venerated resorts in Anatolia and attracted devotees from far and wide. It had especial "virtue" for ladies whose home devotions failed to bring them the honours of maternity, and by the grateful offerings of such worshippers alone the *turbeh* grew in wealth, and its keepers in muscular

piety, daily. After a time it appeared that the popularity of the disciple was outstripping that of the master, and the latter therefore proposed that Ali should set out on one of those missionary pilgrimages which rank high amongst the duties of advanced dervishism. Ali professed a dislike for travelling, but the pious urgency of the sheikh was not to be resisted; and, accordingly, mounted on an ass, the gift of his master, and otherwise properly equipped, he started on his journey amid the benedictions of his chief. Heading nearly due east, he travelled on by slow stages for several weeks till he reached the near neighbourhood of Van, where, finding his provisions and his ass alike exhausted, he resolved to halt for a time in a well-watered valley. Here the ass grew rapidly worse, and on the third day died. Grief for its loss brought a happy inspiration. Producing from the bottom of his wallet a roll of green calico, Ali speedily converted himself into a descendant of the Prophet, and then scooped out a grave for, and buried, his departed donkey. Hardly had this act of pious affection been completed, when a party of *kief*-makers from the neighbouring city approached, and finding the strange Seyd in tears over the fresh mound, inquired the cause of his grief. He had, he told them, just buried his master, a sheikh of great sanctity and marvellous spiritual powers, with whom he had been journeying from Mecca, and was inconsolable accordingly. He was invited into the town, but refused to leave the now hallowed spot. Next

day great numbers thronged out to visit the pious stranger, and, to be brief, it was soon arranged that he should not be torn from the resting-place of his dead master, but should be installed as keeper of a *turbeh* to be then and there built over the grave. This was done, and the new shrine—dedicated to the memory of "the celebrated *Kootb*, or axis, of eminent piety, the renowned Sheikh, Abdul-Kadir, of the order of the Kadirees"—speedily rose into favour amongst the devout all over the surrounding country. The odour of sanctity, too, which clung to Ali from the scene of his noviciate, appeared to have carried with it a larger share of the peculiar grace of that venerated spot—to judge from the increasing number of fair worshippers who resorted almost daily to the new shrine to invoke maternal blessings. As years passed on, the fame of the holy Sheikh Ali and his tomb spread far and wide, till it at length reached the ears and excited the curiosity of his former master, the repute of whose own shrine had waned more and more every year since the departure of his disciple. The old sheikh accordingly resolved to make a pilgrimage to the rival *turbeh* and judge for himself of its own and its keeper's claims to this wide renown. In due time he reached the venerated spot, and found it crowded by—chiefly female—worshippers. It was not till the close of the day's devotions, that he was able to get sight or speech of the saintly guardian, whose flowing robe and ample turban of green for a while prevented recognition. Ali, how-

ever, at once knew and joyfully embraced his venerable teacher. Pressed by the old sheikh to tell him who was the holy santon whose relics, committed to his keeping, had performed such miracles, Ali at length made a clean breast of it, merely contending that the ass which had been thus canonized by popular favour must have been the receptacle of the soul of some re-embodied saint. "Not a doubt of it," answered the old sheikh, "for *his father* it is who lies buried in my own *turbeh*, and you know what wonders we have both witnessed there." Satisfied, however, that the "virtue" had passed from his own shrine to that of Ali, the pious old man resolved to end his days with the latter, and survived a full year or more to rejoice in the undiminished fame of his stalwart disciple. Ali himself lived for many years afterwards, but the *turbeh* lost much of its repute towards the close of his life, and finally ceased to attract worshippers during that of his successor, a fanatical, but decrepit Baghdadlee. Since the death of the latter the tomb had remained without a keeper, and was now in neglected ruin—though the tradition of its former sanctity and special virtue still survived.

From Van I proceeded into Persia, crossing the frontier at Kotour, and a couple of months later returned westwards by the Lake of Oroomiah, through Kurdistan to Mosul, and thence finally across the top of the desert, under the escort of a party of Shammar Arabs, to Mardin and Diar-

bekir. After another short halt in this latter town, I accompanied the Government postal Tatar to Oorfa, Aleppo, and Alexandretta,—a long and chequered journey of which some note will be made farther on.

A line drawn across Lake Van from Moosh to Kotour might be said to mark the boundary between Armenia and KURDISTAN, the second limb of this division. The delimitation is, however, geographically an arbitrary one, as the long and rugged mountain chain which forms the backbone of this latter region has its northern extremity higher up in the central group of Ararat, a short way below which it forks, one arm running nearly due south between Van and Oroomiah, while the other trends round to the south-west, inclosing the former lake, and then rejoins the eastern branch in the Erdoz-dagh, whence, with many ramifications enclosing deep valleys and fissured by several passes, the whole extends south-eastwards as far as 34° N. lat., forming the natural boundary—or rather a sort of neutral ground—between Turkey and Persia, from Bayazid to Kermanshah. In other words, this great tract of territory extends over about 5° of N. lat. and 6° of E. long., with an area of between 45,000 and 50,000 square miles. The northern and southern portions, however, differ widely in their geographical features. The former is much the more mountainous, but incloses one considerable plateau, varying from 4,000 to 7,000 feet above the sea, between the Erdoz-dagh and the Jebel-Judi,

below which the Soli range stretches across from Jezireh to the Persian frontier, rising from the low elevation of less than 2,000 feet near the former town, to more than 13,000 feet in the highest peaks of the Jawar and Rowanduz-daghs, east of Julamerk, the capital of the Chaldean Christians, except along the frontier, which is mountainous throughout; the surface southwards is for the most part level, being diversified only by three or four ranges of low hills, the highest of which is the western ridge of the Jebel-Hamrin, nearly half-way between Mosul and Baghdad. The formation of the northern division is chiefly of limestone, with red sandstones, conglomerate, and occasionally jasper. Its prevailing characteristics are conical bare summits, with irregular sides, the northern slopes of which are partially covered with stunted cedars, valonea, junipers, and other dwarf shrubs; while those to the south are wooded about the top with pines, and with elms, poplars, and walnut-trees towards the pasture-grounds in the deep valleys at their base. Southwards, the range along the frontier is composed chiefly of limestone and sandstone, with clay, slate, diallage, quartz, and occasionally granite. This portion of the chain has a bleak, brown, and irregular serrated outline, with steep sides, scarped in some places into precipitous ravines by the action of the streams, while in others nature has perfected her work by the formation of deep, winding, and well-watered valleys. The chief rivers of this region are the Greater and Lesser Zabs, the Adhim, and the

Diyalah. The first of these has its three different sources on the slopes of the Saral-dagh range, nearly midway between Lakes Van and Oroomiah, whence the trunk stream runs in a southerly direction till it turns westwards past Julamerk, below which it receives the Berdizawi, and then flows south-eastwards to near Rowanduz, where it turns sharply to the south-west, and crossing the Assyrian plain enters the Tigris about thirty miles below Mosul. Nearly sixty miles lower down, the Lesser Zab similarly empties itself into the great river, with a deep but narrow stream. This also rises near the frontier, within twenty miles of the lake of Oroomiah, and runs in a tortuous course nearly parallel to that of its greater namesake, to its confluence with the Tigris immediately above the point at which the latter cuts its way through the Hamrin hills. The Adhim has its chief source in the mountains north of Kerkook, whence it flows nearly due south behind the Hamrin range, receiving a couple of small affluents which, however, only swell its volume into a shallow stream less than twenty yards wide. The Diyalah rises beyond the frontier, about forty miles north-east of Kermanshah, and under the name of the Shirwan runs in a south-westerly direction to its junction with the Holwan at Kizil-robat, where the united stream takes its final name, and then flowing southwards forms its deep current, more than sixty yards wide, into the Tigris, twenty-six miles below Baghdad.

In point of climate, Kurdistan has many advantages

over Armenia, both its heat in summer and cold in winter—though neither can be called temperate—being much less severe than those of the northern province. Thus, while its mountain slopes are clothed with pine-trees, oaks, ash, plane, and walnut trees, its valleys produce in abundance mulberries, cotton, tobacco, hemp, wheat, pulse, maize, the castor-oil plant, melons, pumpkins, grapes, and orchard fruit of almost every variety. Of the products, population, and chief social features of the region, which I have also personally traversed, some details will be found farther on.

CHAPTER IV.

MESOPOTAMIA AND IRAK.

Most homogeneous of the eastern provinces—Their limits and area—Mesopotamia forms two zones—Respective features of these—Their rivers—Euphrates, Tigris, Belik, and Khabour—Lines of communication—Personal journey from Persia to the Mediterranean—the Lake and City of Oroomiah—Ushnoo—Sheikh Ibrahim—His miraculous paternity—Night attack by Kurds—Sidek—Dhianeh—Rowanduz—The Pasha's nephew and doctor—The Hakkari Kurds—First sight of the Zab—Crossing it—Arbela—Nineveh and Nebbi-Yunus—Mosul—Northward with the Tatar—Attacked by insurgent Kurds—With Osman Pasha to Jezireh—Amateur gunnery—Return to Mosul—Across the desert with Shammar Arabs—Halt with Sheikh Abdul-kerim—Nisibin—Mardin—Diarbekir—Oorfa—Severek—Birejik—Aleppo—Antioch—Scanderoon.

THESE two extensive provinces form the most homogeneous section of the Porte's Asiatic dominions. Upper Mesopotamia belongs, indeed, administratively to another vilayet; but, barring only its northern districts and the extreme southern part of Irak, the physical aspect of both is in the main identical; their most commonly spoken language is the same, and, excepting only Arabia, their ethnical varieties are fewer than those of any other of the five divisions.

Together, they extend from the south-eastern slopes of the Taurus and the table-land of Armenia to the Arabian desert and the Persian Gulf, and west and east from the Syrian desert to the Kurdish Alps, over a total area of about 160,000 square miles. Strictly, Al-Jezireh ("the island")—as Mesopotamia is called in the official geography of the Porte—includes only so much of this as lies between the Euphrates and the Tigris as far south as the old Median wall that ran obliquely across the narrow waist in which the two rivers approach each other above Baghdad. But the name has long received a much wider application, and now embraces the whole northern section of this region within the limits just mentioned, extending from below Diarbekir in the north to the latitude of Hit southwards, and from Belis on the Euphrates to beyond Arbela in the great Chaldean plain east of Nineveh. In structure, configuration, and natural products this great stretch of territory forms two distinct zones, the first of which includes the hilly country immediately south of the Taurus and the table-land of Diarbekir, which is separated from the mountain district by ranges of indurated chalk. Nearly the whole of this region is well wooded, and abounds in shrubs and plants common to Asia Minor and Armenia. As the elevation slopes down to the plains of Mesopotamia proper, these become scantier, till, in what here forms the commencement of the second zone, great sterile tracts occur in which vegetation almost disappears. The physical character of

this part of the country, however, varies with its elevation and latitude, as also from the quality of the soil and the presence or absence of moisture. Thus the extensive upland between Nisibin and Jezireh, which has a mean level of 1,550 feet above the sea, is for the most part a mere stony wilderness, unfit for cultivation, and affording scanty pasturage to such flocks and herds as descend during the winter and early spring from the eastern mountains. The fine plain between Oorfa and Harran, on the other hand, being well watered, is splendidly fertile; as is also, though in a less degree, that between Nisibin and the Sinjar hills—an isolated ridge about seven miles wide and forty long, lying nearly midway between Mosul and the Euphrates—and that again south of the latter city to below the confluence of the Zab. The soil of the province generally is a sandy clay, rich in excellent agricultural qualities, and barren only where irrigation fails.[1] In the neighbourhood of rivers and along the formerly numerous irrigating canals it yields luxuriant crops of maize, wheat, barley, cotton, and tobacco, with excellent grapes, melons, figs, apricots, cherries, pomegranates, pears, quinces, and—below Mosul—dates; while its prevailing trees are the sycamore and the silver poplar, with wormwood and

[1] In upper Mesopotamia there is hardly any rain during summer and the greater part of autumn, but in the winter and early spring it falls abundantly, producing excellent pasturage even where distance from rivers and canals precludes husbandry, and leaves the ground mere arid and barren steppe during the other months of the year.

the tamarisk and liquorice plants in great abundance. Irak-Arabi,[1] or Babylonia, comprises the remainder of this division on both sides of the two great rivers, from a few miles above Baghdad to the Gulf. The whole forms one great alluvial plain, slightly undulating in the centre, but without a single natural hill, and, with few trees but the date palm, gradually sinking in elevation southwards till it subsides into an expanse of mere marshes and lagoons. The soil northwards is gravelly, which changes lower down into clay, covered with mould of sand and the more tenacious deposit left by frequent inundations. Agriculture, however, is but little practised, the chief wealth of both the settled and nomad population being derived from their vast flocks, for which the abundance of water provides a plentiful pasturage of coarse grass nearly all the year round. During the extreme summer heat in this section only, the immediate neighbourhoods of the rivers retain their verdure; but these are extensive enough to provide temporarily for the herds, while the face of the country elsewhere is nearly as scorched and bare as if it had been swept by a prairie fire. The number and size of the ruins scattered all over this southern region still attest its once splendid material civilization; nor are these the only evidences of its decadence. Except around Baghdad, the traveller now sees hardly a trace of the date-groves, the vineyards, and the gardens

[1] Irak of the Arabs, to distinguish it from *Irak-Adjem*, or Persian Irak.

which excited the admiration of Xenophon; and with these results of the ancient industry, the population that produced them has almost proportionately decayed. The wild ass, the tiger-cat, and the jackal, prowl at will over the sites of once populous towns and villages; and vast tracts in which agriculture formerly flourished are now either barren steppe or, at best, furnish pasturage to the flocks of the wandering Bedoween.

Besides the Euphrates and Tigris, which, as already mentioned, unite their waters at Kurnah, and as the Shat-el-Arab flow together in a great tidal stream for 120 miles past Bussora and Mohamra to the Gulf, the Belik and the Khabour,[1] both affluents of the Euphrates, and the Shat-el-Hai, which connects the latter with the Tigris, are the only other rivers worth note in this division. The Belik rises near Harran, and, flowing thence in a southerly course, enters the great river a few miles below the ruined town of Rakkah. The Khabour has its source in the Abdul-Aziz range, about twenty miles west of Mardin, a short way below which it is joined by the first of several feeders, and then, skirting the western end of the Sinjar hills, winds through the desert to the Euphrates at Kerkesiah. Much farther south the Shat-el-Hai can hardly be called an independent

[1] A smaller Kurdish river of the same name rises in the mountains north-east of Julamerk, and flowing westwards past Zakho enters the Tigris near the village of Peishapur, about twenty miles below Jezireh.

river: branching from the Tigris near Amarah, a small town about 100 miles above Kurnah, it flows, with a bifurcation midway, almost due south across the inter-riverian peninsula, and enters the Euphrates by two mouths at and below the group of villages called El-Arkah, eighty miles from Kurnah. The Kerkah, which empties into the Shat-el-Arab, five miles below this latter town from the mountains of Khuzistan, is rather a Persian than a Turkish stream, and need not be included in this survey. The canals linking the two great rivers near Baghdad are, though ancient and large, rather public works than natural channels, and will therefore invite mention in another connection.

In addition to the water-ways of its two great rivers,[1] this extensive tract of territory is traversed by three main and several subsidiary lines of communication. The longest of these starts from Diarbekir, and keeping on the left side of the Tigris, though without following its windings, passes Findouk,

[1] The Euphrates is navigable for more than 1,100 miles for vessels of light draught from Birejik, the ferry at which caravans cross from and into Syria, to Kurnah. Notwithstanding several obstructions in its channel, the Tigris is similarly available as high up as Nimroud, twenty-eight miles (by river) below Mosul, and from Diarbekir down to this point—a distance of nearly 300 miles—by rafts, on which almost all the goods traffic from the upper valley is conveyed. Even from Mosul to Baghdad most of the transport is still carried on by the same primitive means, the voyage being made during the flood season in three or four days and nights, and at other times in twelve or fourteen.

Jezireh, and Zakho to Mosul, whence it continues along the western bank of the river to Baghdad. Another but less frequented track—that traversed by myself—runs from Diarbekir southwards through Mardin, Nisibin, and Tilafert to Mosul. A third route leads from Birejik on the Euphrates to Oorfa (from which a branch forks off to Diarbekir) and Mardin, where it joins the line last mentioned; and a fourth strikes the Euphrates at Kalat-Jaber from Aleppo, and, keeping along the right bank, passes Annah and Hit to Kalat-Ambar, where it crosses the river and runs nearly in a straight line south-eastwards to Baghdad.

As the greater part of my return journey from Persia to the Mediterranean lay through this division, some account of it may be here conveniently introduced. After spending a week with Malek Khassem Mirza, one of the Shah's many uncles, at Shishevan, near the eastern shore of the great salt lake of Oroomiah, I crossed the lake in a rude sort of yacht belonging to his Highness, and landed at a point about five miles from the large town to which the lake gives its name. An old mollah from Resht, accompanied by a couple of buxom wives and a slave servant, crossed with me; but during the six or eight hours the voyage lasted, the whole huddled up together in the bows of the boat, and refused to be beguiled by offers of either coffee or raki into any intercourse with the *ghiaour*—an epithet which one of the wives more than once flung at me in a very audible whisper when

I happened to move from the stern in their direction. At Oroomiah I met with a very cordial welcome from the American missionaries, of whose civilizing work among the Nestorians some account will be given farther on. In this once sacredest city of the fire-worshippers I profitably spent nearly a fortnight, and then, having with difficulty engaged mules to carry me through Kurdistan, I set out on the long ride to Mosul. The governor of Oroomiah advised an escort, but as the first day's journey lay through a quiet Persian district, I declined his offer and set out accompanied only by my servant and the muleteer. About five hours brought us to the south-western extremity of the great plain in which the city lies, and as there were no villages on the low mountain range over which the route then passes, we stopped for the night in the Nestorian hamlet of Bella-lash, near the beginning of the ascent. A second day's stage of some thirty miles carried us to the small town of Ushnoo (still Persian), where the governor, Vaheh Khan, pressed me to halt a day to meet one Redja Balek Khan, a magnate from Teheran, who was coming for a week's sport in the neighbourhood. As my muleteer here refused to adventure farther westwards, I had no choice but to accept the invitation, especially as the Khan promised to send me on with a relay of his own animals. Accordingly, we rode out the following afternoon, accompanied by a troop of some forty or more mounted attendants, to meet the great man,

who brought with him nearly as many falconers, musketeers, and other servants. Redja Balek had mixed much with the small Frank—chiefly diplomatic—society of the capital, and in that excellent school had unlearned all religious and moral prejudices, and drank wine and raki so freely and indiscriminately as to be most jovially drunk before dinner was over that evening in the governor's house. Next morning, the promised mules and an escort of mounted Kurds were duly forthcoming, and the governor and Redja Balek Khan, with a numerous retinue, accompanied me for a couple of miles to the base of the great Kurdish range which, beginning here, forms the boundary between Persia and Turkey. They there took leave of me, commending the *beg-zadeh* to the more than common care of Sheikh Ibrahim, the leader of my guard. As this worthy had much more the air of a brigand than a priest, I was curious to learn how he came by the half-clerical title,[1] and in explanation was told of one of those special providences which are sometimes vouchsafed to true believers in this privileged land. His father had been a real sheikh of great sanctity, and dying full of years left a young wife who was inconsolable for her loss. New husbands offered, but with a constancy surpassing Penelope's she rejected them all, and for four long years strewed flowers on the

[1] Among the Bedoween, the title of "sheikh" simply means chief, of whatever rank; but among the Kurds it is nearly equivalent to that of mollah or priest.

grave of her dead lord, and watered them with her tears. Devotion so strong deserved no common reward, and received it; for, at the end of that time, Allah repaid her faithful sorrow—with a son. My conductor was this miraculous gift, and, herculean in height and build, his appearance did credit to his supernatural parentage, in virtue of which he bore the priestly appellative. His features, however, in no way suggested a supernatural origin, but were essentially Kurdish of the most truculent type.

I had hoped to reach Sidek, on the Turkish side of the range in one day from Ushnoo, but sundown found us only commencing the descent, and Sidek was still some dozen miles away below. During the day, partridges and wild pigeons were the only living things we had seen, but just as daylight was vanishing, we descried some black tents on the opposite side of a deep ravine, which Ibrahim at once pronounced to belong to the Nootcha Kurds, a tribe unfriendly to his own, and noted for their cut-throat raids upon travellers. He suggested therefore that, as further progress down the rough and steep descent would be impracticable in the darkness, we should bivouac at this point for the night. I had no choice but to consent, and accordingly a large fire of brushwood having been lighted, we spread our carpets and horse-cloths before it, distributed the eatables in our saddle-bags, and prepared to wait for the dawn. Rolled in a thick cloak, I soon dropped off to sleep, and was 4,000 miles away in dreamland when the

report of firearms and a storm of shouts abruptly wakened and brought me to my feet. In the background, a pell-mell fight was waging between my own and some dozen or fifteen other Kurds—the dreaded Nootchas from the tents. Nearest me was the sheikh, hard pressed in a *handjiar* fight with a couple of the enemy; a little beyond was my servant, a Persian Armenian, struggling on the ground with a third, and, round about, the rest of our party in close *mêlée* with their other assailants. A few seconds sufficed to take all this in and to give my servant's antagonist the benefit of a revolver-shot at a couple of yards' range, on seeing which, and supposing my pistol empty, one of the two engaged with Ibrahim darted at me dirk in hand, but received a second bullet in the shoulder almost at the muzzle of my weapon. The sheikh having at the same time dealt a settler to his remaining man, the fray was now more numerically equal; but seeing four in all of their men disabled, the rest of the attacking party took to flight and disappeared down the ravine. On mustering, we found our own casualties to be three wounded—my servant and one of the escort badly, and another slightly. The enemy had fared worse: the sheik's assailant was stone dead, stabbed through the heart. My pistol had, as I have said, lodged a bullet in the shoulder of a second, and another in the thigh of the third, while the fourth had received a nearly fatal dagger stab in the neck. None of the baggage had been carried off, but one of the mules

had been struck by the first of the three or four pistol-shots fired by the robbers. As soon as it was light we tied our three prisoners together, leaving the dead man to be looked after by his tribe-fellows, and continued the descent towards Sidek. Some three hours' scrambling down a most rugged track brought us into the thickly-wooded ravine in which the village stands, just in time to catch the mudir setting out for Rowanduz. To his untender mercies we handed over our prisoners, who were at once consigned to a sort of dungeon in the old *kaleh*, to live or die, till he returned. As the mudir was taking his own escort, I here discharged mine, not grudging Ibrahim the extra backsheesh he had so well earned.

Beyond Sidek the track again ascends, crossing the shoulder of a low but very rugged range, over which we rode nearly in silence, as the mudir spoke only Kurdish, of which my Persian knew nothing. As it proved impossible to reach Rowanduz before the closing of its gates, at sunset, we put up for the night in the village of Dhianeh, the mudir in a Mohammedan house, and I with a Chaldean priest. The house-room of the latter, however, being both dirty and scanty, his reverence offered to lodge me in the village church, and in it accordingly I had dinner and spent the night. Soon after sunrise, I was roused by the chanting of mass, and found a number of women kneeling all round me, while the old priest and a couple of ragged assistants were

officiating at the altar. Though the place was only some fifteen feet by twenty, there was room enough for us all, and for heaps of newly-picked cotton and barley in the corners besides. The chamber, indeed, only differed in appearance from a small Irish barn in having a flat roof, a little recess fitted up as an altar, and a few dirty old Russian prints of the Virgin and the Apostles hung round the walls. Less than an hour's ride brought us to Rowanduz, where the mudir and I separated, he going to the Pasha's konak, and myself to the khan, whither I bore a letter for the *tadjer-bashi*, or chief Armenian merchant of the place.

This famous town—the virtual, though not the administrative, capital of Kurdistan—is situated in an undulating valley, entirely mountain-locked on all sides. The town itself is perched on a huge cliff, flanked on two sides by a rapid and deep, but narrow river; and on the third by a tributary which here enters the larger stream through a winding precipitous channel, spanned by a dilapidated stone bridge. Naturally very strong from its position, the place is further defended by a castle or fort on the other side of the river, and by several smaller towers on other neighbouring heights—the whole of course valueless against cannon, but impregnable by any force rebel mountaineers could bring against them. As seen from the ridge whence it first becomes visible on the road from Sidek, the place has the most Asiatic appearance of any I had yet visited.

The flat terraced roofs, rising in tiers one above the other, are jumbled together in the most picturesque confusion, but, seen nearer, have more than their full share of the dirt and dilapidation which form the chief features of nearly every eastern town. The streets are narrow and filthy, and the bazaars tumble down and half empty. The population is reckoned at fifteen hundred families, of whom eighty are Jews and the remainder Kurds. To its slight commercial movement, some allusion will be made in a subsequent chapter. In the course of the forenoon, I sent a letter of introduction to the konak, whence a prompt answer came back that the Pasha, though suffering from an attack of ague, would be glad to see me. In the meantime, he sent a large tray filled with fresh fruit and a cavass to attend me while I remained in the town. On visiting the old dignitary, I found him just out of a tertiary fit, and voluble in abuse of Rowanduz and all belonging to it, to which he had come only a few weeks before direct from the delights of Stamboul, catching the fever on his way from the coast. His doctor, a renegade Pole, who spoke French well, more than endorsed all his chief said, and bemoaned the fate that had sent them to this remote and barbarous region. The Pasha insisted on my removing from the khan to a kiosk of his in gardens outside the town, and there in the evening the doctor, the Pasha's nephew, and the *defterdar* (provincial treasurer) joined me at a capital dinner sent from the konak. To convince me of their

superiority to narrow religious prejudices, all three got gloriously drunk on brandy, half-a-dozen cases of which the doctor informed me he had ordered up only a week before from Mosul, as "medical stores." I remained at Rowanduz for three days, and on dismissing my mules from Ushnoo, found that Valeh Khan, instead of giving me animals of his own, had simply requisitioned those of a private owner, for which I had now to pay full price, *plus* the regulation backsheesh. Khoja Mansour, my Armenian friend, assured me that the Khan, with true Persian duplicity had once before played a similar trick on a European traveller strongly recommended to him from Teheran.

On the morning of the fourth day I resumed my journey, escorted for some three miles from the town by the Pasha's nephew, the jovial doctor, and a retinue of more than a dozen mounted attendants. Beyond Rowanduz rises the last wing of this section of the great Kurdish range westwards, up into and over which our road now lay. At the commencement of the ascent, we fell in with a detachment of the great tribe of the Hakkari Kurds, on their way from the mountains to winter in the warm plain of Assyria; and through a long crowding line of these and their flocks we journeyed during the whole of this and the following day. In winding our way through the thronging thousands of sheep, buffaloes, bullocks and horses that accompanied them, I was struck as much by the wealth as by the barbarism

of these nomad savages. The men either rode or trudged along without burdens of any kind, while the women—nearly all of whom wore either turquoise or other nose ornaments—were heavily laden, some with cradles lashed to their backs, full of children; and others with cooking utensils, or lambs and kids too feeble to walk; while the whole of these in addition to their burdens seemed to have the sole care of the laden horses and cattle. Similarly, cows had their young calves bound upon their backs; or sacks filled with children or lambs, or both together, strung across the top of other loads. The lordly husbands, or the extremely young were, in fact, the only unburdened ones of the many thousands we passed. On the forenoon of the second day a painful incident occurred, soon after we had turned the summit of the range and begun the descent downwards. The road lay along the edge of the most precipitous cliff I had yet traversed, and was rendered doubly dangerous by the loose stones that covered most of its narrow width. As I approached this ugly spot, a few yards ahead of my party, a buffalo, with a child lashed on its back, stumbled and rolled over the precipice, striking heavily against the jutting crags till it reached the bed of a torrent many hundred feet below. The mother happened to be close by, and with a ringing scream would have jumped after her little one if she had not been caught by a man who was fortunately near. The zig-zag path wound down to within a short distance

of where the mangled child and animal lay, but I had no wish to see them, and so hurried on through the ravine. At the village of Derabush, where we put up for the night, the Pasha's nephew and his men left me, a relay of fresh zaptiehs provided by the mudir taking their place as escort. From the crest of a low ridge beyond this village the Zab first becomes visible, winding through the great plain of Assyria on its way to the Tigris. Late in the afternoon, we reached the village of Girdamanish, on its banks, and crossed on the frail raft of inflated skins which served as ferry-boat to ourselves, while the horses swam the passage. The river at this point is about as broad as the Thames at Putney, but is deep and nearly as rapid as a mill-race. To cross, the raft is dragged more than half of a mile above the starting point, and then propelled obliquely over the current by rude cane oars, down to the opposite landing-place. Rising, next morning, from the vale through which the Zab here flows, we traversed an undulating sandstone plain, and forded the smaller river Hazer—the ancient Bumadus—near the supposed scene of Alexander's victory over Darius at the battle of Arbela. The latter town itself lies some thirty miles to the south-east; but being the nearest place of importance to the battle-field, the historic fight, as Arrian mentions, took its name from it. Beyond this, the track lay over a swell of grassy hills, from the summit of one of which we descried the distant mounds of Nineveh, and beyond these,

across the Tigris, the minarets of Mosul, the only objects breaking the level of the vast plain that stretches illimitably away till land and sky meet in the far horizon. There was no chance of our reaching Mosul before sunset, when also, as in nearly all these remote eastern towns, the gates are closed for the night. Dusk found us passing through a gap in the crumbling line of embankment that once inclosed the city of Sennacherib, and half-an-hour later I had secured a lodging at the house of a Chaldæan priest in the village of Nebbi-Yunus (Jonah's Tomb), below the great mound of Kouyounjik. Early next morning, I crossed over to Mosul by the bridge of boats that here spans the Tigris, and met with a warm welcome at the British Consulate from Mr. Christian Rassam.

Of Mosul itself some account will be given in a future chapter, and, to preserve continuity of narrative, I also here omit details of a visit to Baghdad —downwards by raft on the Tigris, and back to Mosul by the route along the right bank. During a halt of a fortnight here, the Persian servant I had engaged at Tabreez fell ill and refused to proceed farther, and being unable to satisfactorily replace him, I contracted with the postal Tatar to convey myself and baggage to Diarbekir, on my way across northern Syria to Alexandretta. The difficulties of the journey, however, had in the meantime been complicated by an insurrection of the Kurds in and around Jezireh, past which the postal route lay.

But as Osman Pasha of Mardin had advanced with a numerically strong force to suppress the revolt, no difficulty was apprehended, and early one morning therefore we started from Mosul escorted by a dozen mounted bashi-bazouks. On the second day, we reached Zakho, a small Kurdish town on an island formed by the divided stream of the (Assyrian) Khabour, and at the extreme eastern angle of a valley of the same name, which is separated by the low range of the Jebel-Bekhé from the plain of Mosul. Here we found Osman Pasha, camped with a battalion of regular infantry, four small field-pieces, but with no artillerymen to work them, and some 4,000 mounted and unmounted Arab, Kurdish, and other bashi-bazouks. Though I brought a letter of introduction to this old boor from the governor of Mosul, he not only showed me no civility, but ordered the Tatar to halt for a day and join his military mob next morning in its advance against the insurgents. Protest being useless, this was done, and we accordingly joined the force on its next day's march to 'Peïshapur, a village on the left bank of the Tigris, where the following day was spent in rafting across the men, tents, guns, and other baggage, while the horses were made to swim the passage. The next day's march was only some twelve miles, and as it was here intended to make a halt of three or four days, it was only on the second morning after that, by dint of threatening

complaint at Constantinople, I obtained leave to proceed, with a scanty guard of half a dozen *bashis* to escort us past some disaffected villages eight or ten hours ahead. We had ridden on some twenty miles along the edge of the desert, when, on approaching the Kurdish village of Babila, we noticed what seemed to be a general turn-out of the male inhabitants. The leader of the escort shouted "*dhoushman!*" (enemies) and at once galloped off, closely followed by his five fellows, leaving the Tatar, myself, and the two *surredjees* to shift for ourselves. Our assailants now advanced rapidly, and with loud shouts opened fire with their matchlocks. One shot having grazed the neck of the Tatar's horse, that worthy speedily bolted after our guard, and, resistance being hopeless, the *surredjees* and I followed as fast as our jaded horses could canter, abandoning the pack animals with the mails and my baggage to the enemy. After nearly an hour's wandering in the desert, we caught sight of the escort, and rejoining them struck back to find the Pasha, which we did late at night, encamped at a village some dozen miles ahead of where we had left him in the morning. Needless here to tell how the Tatar and the leader of our bashi-bazouks described the desperate fight we had all made before yielding to overpowering numbers, and how Osman vowed that—after he had disposed of Jezireh—he would make such an example of Babila as had not been heard of since Bedr-Khan

Beg.[1] Next morning, being unable to procure a guide back to Mosul, I had no choice but to accompany the force to its destination, now only six or seven miles off.

Jezireh, which has several times within the present century disputed the Porte's authority, is situated in a deep valley on the western bank of the Tigris, the waters of which insulate the town during nearly half the year, when the divided stream is crossed by a crazy bridge of boats and another dilapidated one of stone. The town is surrounded by a ruinous stone wall, and on the south-western side (by which we approached it) is commanded by a high plateau about a thousand yards off. From this safe but ineffective distance, the infantry major, who also had charge of the four six-pounders, opened fire on the second morning after our arrival; while his battalion and the irregulars commenced discretionary practice with their half-dozen varieties of firearms from several other points at nearly the same range. The result was, of course, harmless to the insurgents, who lined the walls and similarly wasted much powder and lead in reply. The practice on the second day was no better, and the "siege," accordingly, made little progress. Some disparaging remarks which I had made having reached the ears of the Pasha—who had in the meantime left me to find shelter and scraps of black bread where I could, as I was with-

[1] A Kurdish chief, emir of Jezireh, famous some thirty years ago for his massacres of the Nestorians.

out money to buy anything—the old savage supposed I must know something of gunnery, and so, on the morning of the third day, sent his secretary to beg I would take charge of the artillery. For the fun of the thing, I consented—though as ignorant of ordnance practice as of Japanese—on condition that the guns were moved down to within point-blank range of one of the town gates. This was done with a couple of the four pieces during the night, and early next morning, with the aid of the infantry men who had helped the *bimbashi*, I opened fire at about four hundred yards, and by good luck, rather than any skill in laying the gun, the first shot hit and splintered one of the planks of the gate. The second, however, from the other gun, went over the wall, killing a buffalo in the graveyard beyond, but still in the fair line of the gateway. Lowering the muzzle of this piece therefore gave us the range for both guns, and a few rounds soon demolished the wooden obstruction, but revealed behind it a massive barricade of large stones against which six-pounder pop-guns were useless. In the meantime, too, the insurgents had not been idle. A crowd that lined the walls nearest to us kept up a sharp matchlock fire, which killed one and wounded three others of my improvised gunners. Further practice from this point, therefore, being both useless and dangerous, the guns were backed out of musket range, and a random fire kept up for a couple of hours longer at such groups of the enemy as offered a likely target—

with what results I never learned. That evening the Pasha invited me to dinner—the first regular meal I had eaten since leaving Mosul—and during it he was loud in declaring the vengeance he would wreak on the "sons of burnt fathers," when he once got into the town. As the other gates had doubtless been similarly built up, it was decided next day to try the effect of the nearest approach we could make to a bombardment, and for this purpose all four of the guns were dragged round to a point from which a sort of plunging fire could be kept up on the town out of reach of the muskets on the wall. This was done, and, after much desultory practice at a high elevation, I levelled the whole of my battery at the dome of the nearest mosque. We missed the dome but struck the wooden gallery round the minaret. A second volley plumped into the arched roof, but before I could deliver a third, the Pasha's secretary ran up with an order to cease firing. The old fanatic had been watching operations with a telescope from the rear, and was scandalised that an "infidel" should thus sacrilegiously damage even a rebel *djami*. The result, however, was soon apparent. The news that an *Ingelez topjee* (English gunner) was directing the attack had somehow reached the town, and soon after the last round of the guns a white sheet or flag was waved from the walls. Half-an-hour later, a green-turbaned Seyd came out to propose terms of surrender. He reported that several days before, Yezdinshir Bey, the

rebel chief, had gone into the mountains, leaving the town in the hands of a lieutenant, who now offered to lay down his arms on the condition of a general amnesty. The Pasha, however, refused to treat on these terms, insisting on a general turn-out of the adult male population before he entered, and as the Seyd could not promise this, the negotiations fell through. That night, I succeeded in inducing a bashi-bazouk to provide me with a mount, and to guide me back to Mosul, on promise of payment by the consul on our arrival. We left the camp about midnight, and by daylight were well away on our hundred miles' ride. Pushing on with few and short stoppages, we reached the hospitable door of the Consulate on the third morning from Jezireh, after an absence of a fortnight, during which I had not changed my clothes, had never slept on even a Kurdish excuse for a bed, and for most of the time had been more than half starved.

Generous old Christian Rassam, however, was equal to the occasion. Providing me with fresh clothes and ample funds, against my draft on London, a week later he started me again northwards under the escort of a party of Shammar Arabs, who contracted to conduct me safely across the north-western corner of the desert to Nisibin, whence the post-road was safe on to Mardin and Diarbekir.

Leaving Mosul at dusk, we rode on all night, and by noon next day reached Tilafert, a ruinous half Turcoman, half Arab village, and the only cluster of

fixed human habitations between Mosul and the Kurdish villages that skirt the desert within half a hour's ride of Nisibin. Here we learned that Abdul-kerim, the brother of Ferhan, the supreme sheikh of the Shammar tribe, was encamped with a large force a few miles off in the desert, and the petty sheikh who commanded my escort consequently refused to go farther before reporting his presence to his superior. For this purpose the sheikh himself and a couple of his men started early next morning and returned on the afternoon of the following day with an order for us to make a detour so as to visit Abdul-kerim himself. Leaving Tilafert late in the evening —where, wonderful to say, my Turcoman host refused to accept payment for my three days' entertainment—we rode for about ten miles in a north-westerly direction into the desert, and then in the bright moonlight sighted the vast encampment of many hundred tents pitched at considerable distances apart, with flocks of sheep, goats, and camels clustering everywhere between. As it was now past midnight, we halted on the outskirts of the camp, at the tent of one of the minor sheikhs, in a dirty corner of which I spread my travelling mattress, but the bleating of a number of lambs and kids, and the growls of a couple of camels which also shared the tent with the sheikh's numerous family, put sleep out of the question. Every one, however, was afoot before daylight, and an hour or two later, I was conducted to the tent of Abdul-kerim, which

stood nearly in the centre of the encampment, with the great man's tufted spear stuck upright in front. In size, it was a large marquee, made of the same black goat's-hair stuff as all around it, but was divided into three compartments, in the centre one of which the sheikh himself received me, seated on a low carpet-covered divan. He spoke only a few words of Turkish, but understood my own scanty stock of it sufficiently to make out who and what I was, and the object of my journey. He professed a great friendship for the English, as both himself and his brother Ferhan owed much to the good offices of our Residency at Baghdad. After a long conversation, carried on essentially under difficulties, breakfast was brought in from one of the side compartments. This consisted of excellent flap-bread, goat's milk, cheese and dates, followed by *finjans* of very good unsweetened coffee, and was shared by three or four elders who had dropped in to pay their morning salaams. The Sheikh invited me to similarly take the evening meal with him, and for the day handed me over to the care of one of his own chief attendants, who spoke a little Turkish. Arab encampments have been so often described that I need merely say here that this one was of the genuine desert type, which has probably changed in none of its features since Terah and his sons, with similar surroundings, traversed these same plains on their journey from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan. The tents of the chief and a few of the wealthier

sheikhs are, in various degrees, larger and better plenished than those of what may be called the rank and file of the tribe, which consist merely of a long oval sheet of goat's-hair cloth stretched over two or more poles, and pinned in the usual way to the earth, with a dividing curtain inside to separate the men's apartment from that of the women. A piece of felt or old matting spread on the sandy floor, the camel pack-saddle, horse-gear, two or three cauldrons for cooking, as many large platters and wooden drinking bowls, and the master's arms constitute the whole furniture of the tent. As the nomad Bedoween women only cover their faces when on a journey, those whom I now saw were unveiled, but occasionally one drew her dark blue kerchief obliquely across her face as I passed a tent door, or turned her back bodily on the over-curious *ghiaour*. Most of them wore armlets,—in a few cases of silver, but for the greater part of brass or glass; some ankle-rings of the same material, and nearly all either a large gold or silver ring or a turquoise ornament through the left cartilage of the nose. A few of the younger girls only could be called pretty, though nearly all, up to the early age at which Arab women become *passees* and withered, had regular features and graceful lissome figures; but young and old were alike disfigured by indigo-stained eyelids and lips, and henna-dyed finger-nails and palms. They similarly tattoo other parts of the body, but

these are happily hid from view by the loose cotton drawers and long blue chemise of the same stuff which, with the dark handkerchief, form as a rule their only clothing. The evening meal, served soon after sunset, was shared by eight or ten other guests, and consisted of a good fowl pilaff of rice, a couple of roast lambs, a peculiar dish of bruised wheat and butter, called *burghûl*, and a sort of sweet-meat made of honey, butter, and flour, which all but myself greatly relished. Coffee again followed, and afterwards quite a small crowd of visitors dropped in and squatted within and outside the door of the tent, when a loud guttural talk was kept up till near mid-night. The Sheikh having arranged that I was to proceed on the morrow, I took leave of him when the party broke up, slept soundly for some hours on his own divan, and before sunrise was again in the saddle and heading nearly due north with my old guard on our way to Nisibin. Two-thirds of this day's route lay along the eastern base of the Sinjar hills, a long and narrow range that stands out lonely in the desert, and is exclusively inhabited by Yezidees, the mis-called Devil-worshippers. The Arabs had brought a sheep and a supply of bread with them from the encampment, and about noon we halted, while they slaughtered and roasted the animal over a fire of camel-thorn and other low scrub in which the desert abounds. This half-raw repast over, the march was resumed, and about an hour after dusk we reached the camp of another detachment of this great tribe,

where we alighted at the tent of Sheikh Tei, the chief in command. Here I was again hospitably fed and lodged for the night, and as the next day's stage was to be a long one, we were again on the move before sunrise, and without further adventure reached Nisibin soon after dark.

Though called a town, Nisibin is now a mere collection of hovels sheltering some 2,000 inhabitants, chiefly Arabs of the Tai tribe, who speak Kurdish as well as their own language. The small remainder are Jacobite and Armenian Christians, with a few Jews and Turcomans. The town stands on the north-eastern edge of the desert, a short way from the few ruins of the ancient city (Nisibis), and is of no commercial or other importance, except as forming a stage on the alternative route from Diarbekir to the lower Tigris valley. On reaching the khan, I heard that Osman Pasha had arrived five days before, in ignominious retreat from Jezireh, and called on him next morning to learn the news. To my surprise, the old fanatic received me with almost hearty civility, and after reproaching me for my desertion, narrated how the insurgents, having received large reinforcements from the mountains under Yezdinshir himself, had three days later, made a sally, routing his whole force, with the loss of two cannon, and nearly capturing himself. He expressed great regret that he had not accepted the terms of capitulation offered by the Seyd, "for once in," said the old savage, "I could have cut their throats and

defiled their fathers' graves as I liked." Kismet, however, never gave him another chance, as within a week after this a fit of apoplexy carried him off.

As the route northwards from this point was safe, I here dismissed my Arabs, and set out the same afternoon for Mardin, accompanied only by a single mounted cavass and the *surredjee*. Travelling all night, we reached Mardin by sunrise the following morning. This is a town of considerable size, perched on one of the boldest summits of Mount Masius, the difficult ascent to which zig-zags for more than a mile among vineyards and fruit-trees. "Mardin," says Mr. Ainsworth, "may be truly called the Quito of Mesopotamia." Certainly, the prospect from it southwards is one of the most striking that can well be conceived. As far as the eye can reach, a vast expanse of cultivated plain stretches out from the foot of its cliff as on a map, studded with villages and mounds that dwindle to the size of mole-hills as they sink out of visual range on the flat horizon. Except this magnificent prospect, however, there is nothing worthy of note in the town. Its population numbers about 15,000, of whom rather more than half are Mussulmans, and the remainder Christians (with a few Jews) of four or five different sects. The common language is Kurdish, but Arabic is also spoken. Halting a day here, we started on the following morning for Diarbekir, which was reached on the afternoon of the second day, in the midst of a pelting rain storm that had raged incessantly for

the last ten hours of the journey. A letter from Mr. Rassam to Khodja Bedosh, the principal Armenian merchant of the place, procured me a very cordial welcome and luxurious entertainment during the week I remained in this famous old town. My acknowledgments are also due for the proffered hospitality of Mr. Holmes, then H.M. Consul, whose subsequent valuable services in European Turkey have brought him well-earned reward.

As an important trade centre and the chief city of a vilayet which includes most of Kurdistan, Diarbekir will be more fitly described in a subsequent chapter, and I confine myself therefore to here saying that, with a population of nearly 40,000, it occupies the site of the old Roman Amida, on the western bank of the Tigris, and on the extreme eastern border of Asia Minor. Accompanying the post being the speediest and least troublesome, though most fatiguing way of continuing my journey westwards, I again contracted with the Tatar to deliver me safely, and on "inclusive terms," in Aleppo. This involved travelling night and day, without other halt for sleep than about an hour's rest at whatever station might be reached nearest midnight, when a brief stretch of the limbs in the wretched *posta-khaneh* is the only repose taken by the Tatar on his long fifteen days' ride from Baghdad to the Bosphorus. These men, however, sleep fairly well in the saddle, and by this time I had myself acquired the power of dozing, especially on a *rahwan* or ambling horse

without much risk of a fall. Starting therefore early one morning, accompanied by only four mounted guards, we rode out through the Mardin gate, and cantered rapidly for more than twenty miles over the elevated plain to the northern extremity of the Kara-dagh, through which the road to Oorfa — then blocked with snow—passes. Changing horses at this point, we plodded through this pass for another similar stage to the Kurdish village of Khanakhi, a post-station of such evil repute that it is generally avoided by unescorted travellers and caravans. After an hour's rest, we again mounted and rode through the night over a very rugged track, passing several villages and Turcoman encampments, till we dropped suddenly, next forenoon, on the little town of Severek, embosomed in trees, and with its old ruined castle, once commanding the place, looking picturesque even in its wintry desolation. Thence on again, after another change of horses, over the low range of the Karatsh-er-Raha hills, which divides the plain of Severek from that of Oorfa, reaching this latter town—the Ur of the Chaldees, and Edessa of the Crusades—early on the following morning, happily to find the governor absent, and having left an order to detain the Tatar till his return in the afternoon. This welcome halt afforded me a couple of hours' sleep in the post-house, and time for a subsequent stroll through this famous old biblical and mediæval town. It is situated on the slope of a hill crowned by a ruinous citadel, which connects the turreted

wall that incloses the whole in an irregular circle, and is itself surrounded by a fosse cut deep in the solid rock. Even if armed, however, this old fortalice would be of no value against artillery, as it is commanded by several adjacent heights. A fine mosque, consecrated to Abraham—who is as much venerated by Moslems as by either Christians or Jews—also forms a striking feature of the place. Outside the town a splendid belt of gardens extends for several miles east and south-east into the plain that finally merges in the desert. The population of the place consists of about 50,000 Mohammedans, and 10,000 Armenians, Jacobites, and Jews. The Pasha returned shortly before dusk, and an hour later we were again in the saddle, and rode through the night over an undulating and barren country to the Turcoman village of Tcarmelik, where the horses were changed, and the journey resumed over a still rougher track to Birejik, on the Euphrates, which was reached before noon. Bir, as it is also indifferently called, is the most frequented of all the passages from Syria into Mesopotamia, and is consequently a place of considerable commercial movement. The town, which is walled, and capped by a picturesque old citadel, is built along the slope and summit of a high chalk bank, and has a population of about 9,000, mostly Turks. The ferry is here worked by large flat-bottomed boats, of a very ancient model, which, owing to the force of the current, are, like the rafts at Peïshapur, swung rather than propelled obliquely

across the river under the steerage of a long sweep, pivoted on a high curved stern-post. In one of these old-world craft we crossed in the afternoon, and passing close by Nizib—the scene of the Turkish defeat by the Egyptians in 1839—rode on through the moonlit night with one change of horses, over a comparatively level and cultivated country with many villages, reaching Aleppo early next forenoon. I here parted with the Tatar, and, after a week's rest under the hospitable roof of Mr. Riddell, the leading English merchant of the place, completed my journey to the Mediterranean in an easy three days' ride, halting the first night at the village of Dana, and the second in Antioch, whence ten hours carried me over the Ghiaour-dagh, through the Beylan pass to swampy Scanderoon. Here I found the Vice-Consul and the whole of his family—excepting only his wife, a buxom Aleppine—*down* with the malarious cross between typhus and phrenitis known as "Syrian fever," which yearly kills its thousands along this coast, and, like the "Baghdad button" (which I escaped), has the bad peculiarity of developing, as it did in my own case, several months after the germs of it have been caught. In this swamp I was detained by bad weather for ten days, when an up-coast steamer put in, and a week later I was again comfortably lodged in Misserie's hotel, Constantinople, after an absence of nearly eleven months.

CHAPTER V.

SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

Turkish official divisions—Boundaries—Mountain system—Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon—These divide the country into three longitudinal sections—Their respective features—The Jordan valley—The Haurân—Its sub-districts—Pashalic of Aleppo—Rivers—Orontes, Leontes, and Jordan—Minor streams—Lakes—The Dead Sea—Its special features—Gennesaret—Climate—Three varieties, dependent on elevation and nature of soil.

MODERN touring and exploration have so popularised the geography of this division, that even Captain Burton was hard set to discover what could be more than rhetorically called "unknown Syria." A shorter sketch of it, therefore, than of those that precede will here suffice. In Turkish official geography—though not administratively—the whole is divided into the three sections of (1) Haleb, which consists of the modern pashalic of Aleppo and Cœle-Syria; (2) of Saïda, including what was anciently Phœnicia and Palestine; and (3) Sham, or Syria proper. These together comprise a comparatively narrow strip of country bounded on the north by the eastern wing of the Taurus (Amanus), east by the Euphrates and the Syrian desert, west by "the Great Sea," and

south by Egypt[1] and Arabia Petræa. The extreme length of the whole is about 440 miles, and its width from 50 to 150 miles The principal feature of this long tract is a mountain range which, branching southwards from the Taurus, runs like a double spine through two-thirds of its length, broken at several points by valleys of various width, but dividing the whole into three distinct belts. The first (northern) links of this great chain are locally known as the Giaour-dagh and the Jebel-Kraad, to which succeeds the wooded ridge of Jebel-Nusairiyeh terminating in the "entering in of Hamath." South of this begins the main chain of Jebel-Liban, or Mount Lebanon, which runs for nearly ninety miles south-west, attaining its greatest altitude (of 10,000 feet) in the peak a few miles below Tripoli, on the slope of which nestles the famous grove of cedars. Below Tyre this great range increases in width, but decreases in height till, beyond the traditionally sacred cone of Tabor, it sinks into the great plain of Esdraelon—which extends nearly from the Mediterranean to the eastern desert—and under new names reappears in the ridge of Jebel-Mar-Elias (Carmel) and the mountains of Samaria. South again of these, it spreads into the low ranges that form "the hill country of Judæa," and finally merges in the Desert

[1] The little river El-Arish, which runs into the Mediterranean at the small town of that name, is the exact southern boundary in this direction.

of the Wanderings (El Tih) and the rugged peninsula of Sinai.

Returning northwards, the eastern limb of this great double range first begins to have continuity in Jebel-el-Ala, which runs south-westwards from the parallel of Antioch to that of the lofty coast cone of Mount Casius, then dips, rises again a few miles southwards as Jebel-Riha, and runs in a broken chain of hills past the ruins of Apamea to the plain of Hamath. South of this great lowland, the chain is resumed in the long ridge of the Jebel-es-Shurky, or the Anti-Lebanon. Though this is generally lower than the western range, abreast of which it runs, the culmination of the whole double line occurs in one of its peaks, the Jebel-es-Sheikh (Mount Hermon), which, thirty miles west of Damascus, attains an elevation of 11,000 feet. A short way southwards of this it forks, sending out a long spur south-westwards, while its eastern arm, under the name of Jebel-Heish, curves in a south-easterly direction inclosing the upper fountains of the Jordan, and below the Lake of Tiberias breaking into the rocky upland of Gilead and Moab that skirts the lower valley of the river and the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. Below this, it spreads south and east, with many wadys, till its roots unite with those of the western chain, and both are lost in the mountain wilderness between Suez and Akaba.

Both these great ranges send out transverse spurs

east and west, and, besides the extensive plains just mentioned, are furrowed with valleys of varying width and depth. Throughout Syria, the slopes and many of the summits of both are for the most part thickly wooded ; but in Palestine, south of Samaria —which abounds in the richest mountain and valley scenery—the hill vegetation is everywhere scanty, and the general aspect of the country east and south of Sharon so rugged, desolate, and barren as to make it hard to comprehend how such a land could ever have possessed the fertility typified by the scriptural boast of its flowing with milk and honey.

As has been said, this double chain divides most of Syria and Palestine into three distinct longitudinal sections—namely, the maritime district between the western range and the sea ; the long succession of valleys between the two ridges themselves; and the eastern tract between the latter and the desert. Of these, the first and third contain many still important cities, and the whole are rich in the grandest historical associations. The seaward belt varies much in breadth, in some parts expanding into wide plains in others contracting to narrow passes ; while in a few instances the mountain offshoots extend down to the sea, and form striking promontories along the coast. It begins northwards with the marshy plain of Issus, within a curve of which stands Alexandretta (Scanderoon), built mostly on a swamp below the sea-level. The harbour here is the best on the coast of Syria, and this sanitarily wretched town has,

accordingly, long been the port of Aleppo, northern Mesopotamia, and Mosul. South of this, and separated from it by the many-summited Akma-dagh, which terminates in the bold promontory of Cape Khansir, comes the fine alluvial plain of Suedia, through which the Orontes enters the sea near the old silted-up harbour of Seleucia—chosen by the promoters of the Euphrates Valley Railway as the western terminus of that long-debated line. Beyond this, past the culminating peak of Mount Cassius, lie the deep valley and little port of Latakia, famous for its tobacco, inland of which a succession of gorges and rocky crags extends to the main ridge of Jebel-Kraad. The plain of Jebilé follows, twelve or fifteen miles wide, between the sea and the ridge of the Nusairiyeh, up to which it slopes by an incline of irregular vine-clad hills, then past the mouth of the Bukâa valley, between this latter chain and the Lebanon, through the undulating plain of which Tripoli is the port, serrated by more than a dozen spurs from the great range, down through Kesrouan, the country of the Maronites, to the commercial capital of Beyrout. South of this important town lies the rugged hill district of the Druzes, extending past Saïda (Sidon) to the mouth of the Litâni (Leontes) river above Sur (Tyre), across which rocky offshoots from Lebanon approach the sea at several points. A few miles southwards, below the headland of Cape Nakûrah, the fine plain of Akka (Acre) is reached, and the striking promontory of Carmel, with

Caifa nestling at its base, beyond which begins the great Vale of Sharon, famous still for its fertility and its flowers. Of this, however, which may be called the last section of the maritime belt, only a comparatively small portion is now cultivated, the rest serving as pasturage in great part for the flocks and herds of the Bedoween. Down past Cæsarea, the old capital of Herod, Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem, and Ascalon, of crusading renown, this fine valley stretches with an average width of from fifteen to twenty miles, to Gaza, below which its rich loamy soil gradually changes into the alkaline sand of the desert that spreads thence to Egypt.

The second belt, between the double chain of central mountains, may be similarly traced southwards from below the lake of Antioch to the latitude of Latakia, to which point it consists merely of the long ravine that forms the channel of the Orontes, which widens into valleys or contracts into gorges, according as the broken ridges on either side recede from or approach the river. South of this, past Apamen, it broadens between the right bank of the stream and the eastern base of the Nusairiyeh range to the plain of Hamath, which stretches from the banks of the Orontes to the desert of Palmyra, and then below Homs, into the long crevass of the Bukâ'a [1] (Cœle-Syria)—between the two Lebanons—the most fertile and best cultivated tract in all this division. This splendid strip of country, which has

[1] El-Bukâ'a, "the deep plain."

an elevation of 2,300 feet above the sea, extends down past Baalbek to Mount Hermon, round the western base of which it narrows for a few miles into the valley of the upper Jordan, to expand again into the fine upland of Galilee, east and west of which the mountains spread rather in broken masses than in continuous chains. Thence on southwards through the narrow upper basin of the sacred stream to Lake Tiberias, below which it widens into the long depression that separates Palestine proper from the mountainous districts of Bashan, Gilead, and Moab, and through which the Jordan tortuously winds in its descent to the Dead Sea. South of this, the roots of the inclosing chains interlace, and are lost in the Idumæan desert.

The great plain of Damascus, east of the Anti-Lebanon, and the outlying district of the Haurân are almost the only parts of the third and easternmost belt that call for notice. The sections north and south of these consist chiefly of an arid, sandy plateau, occasionally relieved by a few oases, but the whole altogether devoid of economical interest, and belonging rather to the debatable boundary of the desert than to Syria and Palestine proper. Damascus itself, the oldest city in the world, will invite some description farther on, and it will therefore suffice to say here that the splended expanse to which it gives its name—still abundantly watered by the biblical Abana and Pharpar and other streams—for beauty excels, and for fertility and cultivation

vies with, the best parts of the Bukâa. Its many outlying villages are, however, still harassed by the frequent forays of the Bedoween, who not only themselves pay no taxes, but levy heavy blackmail in kind from the settled population, sometimes—according to the energy or apathy of the governor for the time being—down to the city gates. About 120 miles to the north-east, out in the very desert, lies Palmyra (Tadmor), now as far removed beyond the ken of politics as of trade, and calling therefore for mere mention here. Due east of the Lake of Tiberias, and separated from the plain of Damascus by a strip of desert country, the great tract of the Haurân forms one of the most interesting sections of Palestine. Now, as in Roman times, it is divided into the three sub-districts of the Ledja, the Nukrah, and the Jebel, covering in all an area of some sixty miles from north to south, and nearly forty from west to east. The Ledja is a wild stony plain, which contains, however, several pasture-grounds and receives some cultivation from a scanty population of lawless Arabs, as defiant of the Pasha now as their ancestors were of Herod. En-Nukrah, which lies south of this inhospitable tract, is a splendidly fertile plain thickly studded with towns and villages, once populous but now half deserted through the frequent raids of the Anizeh Bedoween. El-Jebel is, as its name imports, a mountain district between Nukrah and the great eastern desert, abounding, like the other

two sections, in ruined towns, but still peopled by a hardy Druze population, whose sheikhs practically govern the whole Haurân. Much of the present importance of this region arises from the passage through it of the Great Hadj route from Damascus to Mecca. But even this has been much diminished within recent years by the increasing preference of pilgrims for the shorter and less fatiguing route across Egypt and by sea to Djedda.

North of these central and southern belts lies the great pashalic of Aleppo, which forms a distinct section of the country. This extensive tract stretches from the bay of Antioch to the Euphrates, and from the Taurus to Jebel-el-Sis (about 35° 70′ N. lat.), covering an area of more than 7,000 square miles. Its sea front includes the plains of Issus and Suedia, already mentioned, and the termination of the Akma-dagh, whose extensions north and south separate these maritime districts from the great inland plateaux of Umk, Aleppo, and Aintab. These latter, though also reticulated with several low mountain ridges, contain fine level tracts, for the most part very fertile, and thickly studded with Turkish, Armenian, and Turcoman villages.

The other natural features of this division may be briefly noted. Besides the Euphrates—of which only so much as bounds the north-eastern districts can be claimed for it—Syria possesses but two other considerable rivers, the Orontes and Leontes (Bahr-el-A'sy and Bahr-el-Litâni), already incidentally

mentioned. Of these the former has its two sources on the western slopes of the Anti-Lebanon, about ten miles north-east of Baalbek, the ridge above which forms the chief watershed of the country. The trunk stream formed by their union near the village of Shaat, then zig-zags northwards through Cœle-Syria, receiving several small affluents from the mountain slopes east and west, till, as it approaches Homs, it widens into the little lake of Bahr-el-Kades, six miles long by two broad. Issuing from the northern end of this, it runs a mile and a half to the westward of Homs, and beyond Hamah, forty miles north, flows through the rich pasture valley of El-Ghab, draining northward of that the slopes of Jebel-Anzeri and Jebel-el-Ala west and east. A few miles farther on, in the plain of Umk, it bends rapidly to the west, and, after receiving the large affluent of the lower Kara-su from the lake of Antioch (four miles off), turns south-westwards and, flowing in a broad navigable stream past Antioch and the classic groves of Daphné, enters the sea near Suedia, 150 miles from its source. The Leontes, next in length and volume, rises on the southern side of the Baalbek watershed, about five miles south-west of the famous ruins, and flows down the Bukâa, draining the ridges east and west by many affluents to below Hermon—a spur of which here separates it from the Jordan—where it makes a bold sweep to the west, and forcing its way through a precipitous gorge of the Lebanon, winds through a broad tract of

meadow land to the sea five miles north of Tyre, after a total course of nearly sixty miles.

Of the many minor rivers of Syria, the Nahr-Barada—the biblical Abana—is still in physical value the most important. Rising in the centre of Anti-Lebanon, it winds for nearly twenty miles down the eastern slopes of that range into the plain of Damascus, through which it circulates in a network of artificial channels that, supplemented by the two small streams from Mount Hermon—which, united, form the Pharpar—plentifully irrigate the whole, and produce the sea of verdure in the centre of which the solemn and secluded capital of Syria stands. One other stream which classic fable and Milton's muse have especially celebrated, may be mentioned—the Nahr-Ibrahîm, or Adonis, which runs down from the Lebanon to the sea a few miles north of Beyrout. On the banks of this stream it was, says the myth, that the favourite of Venus received his death-wound, and while at its source, at Afka, the goddess herself was worshipped, as Astarte or Ashtaroth, with peculiarly licentious rites, at Byblus, near its mouth, the Syrian maidens annually lamented the fate of her lover, whose fluvial namesake

> "Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
> Of Thammuz, yearly wounded,—"

the red earth swept down by the flood giving to the water the ensanguined hue thus explained by poetic fancy.

Of "the waters of Israel," the Jordan alone need be noticed. More than a score of minor streams drain the western slopes and plains into the Mediterranean, and those beyond the Jordan into that river, but the latter itself forms the only great fluvial feature of the country. The most northern source of this famous stream issues from the western base of Hermon, near the little town of Hasbeiya, from whence, under the name of the Nahr-Hasbany, it flows down west of south through the Wâdy-el-Teïm to the small marshy lake of Huleh (Merom), into which also flows near the same point the little Nahr-el-Dan, or lesser Jordan, from its fountain at Banias (Cæsarea-Philippi, the Israelitish Dan), a few miles to the north-east. Issuing from the lake, in one volume, the El-Urdun (Jordan) as it is now called, runs nearly due south for a dozen miles, separating the western mountains from the rich tract of Batihah on the east, when it again spreads into a second and larger lake—the beautiful Gennesaret. Traversing this as the Rhone runs through Lake Leman, it enters the singular tract called El-Ghor, the great depression that extends for sixty miles, with a fall of 900 feet, from Tiberias to the Dead Sea. Down this, the Jordan winds in a rapid tortuous course of nearly 200 miles, through alternate patches of parched soil, and luxuriant growths of wild herbage, terminating, as it approaches and empties into desolate Asphaltites, in a marsh of reeds and willows on its right bank,

and on the left in a dreary nitrous-crusted tract on which hardly a tuft even of stunted camel-thorn is to be seen.

The lakes of Palestine complete the tale of its chief physical characteristics; and among these, as indeed amongst the known lakes of the world, the Dead Sea is unique. Modern exploration has stripped it of most of the pestilential and other terrors with which the old travellers had invested it, but it still retains enough to render it the most dreary and death-like sheet of water on the earth. Inclosed within a chasm formed by lofty limestone cliffs, which rise to about 1,500 feet above its level on the western, and some 2,500 feet on the eastern side, it measures nearly forty miles from north to south, with a width of about nine miles, narrowing to five at its upper extremity. For two-thirds of its length it averages a depth of 1,300 feet, but shallows southwards to from ten to twelve feet, and occasionally to even two or three at a ford between the long tongue or promontory of Lisan, that projects from its eastern side opposite Kefek and the western shore near Wady-es-Seiqûl. Beneath this shallow section it is that the most recent criticism places the engulfed Cities of the Plain. Though nearly as clear and blue as the water of the Mediterranean, that of the Dead Sea is salt, slimy, and fœtid beyond description; its taste like a mixture of brine and rancid oil; and its buoyancy so great that, as I can personally vouch, the human body will not sink in it, strive as the

bather may.[1] Bitumen bubbles up plentifully from the bottom, and with the sulphur, nitre, and rock-salt that abound along most of the shore-line, sufficiently explains the density and the nauseous taste and smell of the water. The old traveller's tale that the water itself and the evaporation from it are alike fatal to animal life, is less than half true: the twenty-six per cent. of saline matter which the water contains precludes indeed the existence of fish; but, though its exhalations under a burning summer sun are thick and fever-inducing, they are in no worse degree poisonous, and birds fly along its shores and over its surface as livelily as in the mountains on either side. Besides the sulphur above-mentioned, lava, pumice-stone, and volcanic slag are found in considerable quantities on the eastern shore—all attesting igneous action on a large scale at some remote period. "Strewn along its desolate margin," says Dean Stanley, "lie the most striking mementoes of this last conflict between life and death, trunks and branches of trees borne down from the thickets

[1] Touring in Syria and Palestine is now so commonplace, that I spare the reader some preserved notes of a two months' sea and land journey from Alexandretta to Jaffa, thence to Jerusalem, Mar Sâba, the Dead Sea, Jericho, and the Quarantina; and subsequently northwards to Damascus, and back to Beyrout by the fine French road. Myself and two companions, however, had the distinction of being relieved of our cash and partly stripped by some Moab Arabs at the Jordan ford near Jericho,—an incident that had not happened for four years previously, and which has not, that I have heard, re-occurred since.

of the river jungle by the violence of the Jordan, thrust out into the sea and thrown up again by its waters dead and barren as itself."

Sixty miles north of this, lies Lake Tiberias—the Sea of Galilee, or Lake of Gennesaret—328 feet below the Mediterranean. This scene of so many sacred episodes is also of volcanic origin, and occupies the lower part of the basin formed within the sweep made by the two great mountain chains as they run southwards. In shape an irregular oval, it is thirteen miles long by six broad, and, although, as looked at from the castle of the little town on its banks, pretty and effective as a bit of lake scenery, the bareness and monotony of the surrounding mountains deprive it of all higher claim to landscape beauty. Ten miles north of this again, Lake Huleh (Merom) as before mentioned, receives the head streams of the Jordan in a triangular marsh-belted sheet about five miles in length by three-and-a-half in width. The plain land outside its swampy margin is fertile and well cultivated, and the lake itself abounds in excellent fish. Three other small lakes—Bahret-esh-Shurkiyeh, Bahret-el-Kibliyeh, and Bahret-el-Hijaneh—lie out on the edge of the desert behind Damascus, but they present no features of physical or other interest, and need therefore be merely mentioned. The Bahr-el-Abzad, or Lake of Antioch, nearly 200 miles north of these, is a much more important sheet, occupying the western portion of the great plain of Umk,

north-east of Antioch, and formed by the junction of the upper Kara-su, the Afrin, and other streams. This lake is nearly eighteen miles long by six broad, and besides affording water-way for a considerable traffic in local produce, employs a large number of boats in an abundant fishery for the supply of the neighbouring districts. Besides these waters, there are a few small lakelets on the upper Orontes and elsewhere, but none of the whole are of any importance.

As might be expected from its configuration, the climate of this division is very various, and has little or no relation to latitude. The many diversities of temperature may, however, be reduced roundly to three—namely, the cold, the warm and moist, and the warm and dry. Of these, the first belongs to the higher slopes of the Lebanon and other ranges whose summits lie above the perpetual snow line: here the winter, from the end of October to April, is nearly as sharp and bracing as that of North Germany, followed by a mild spring, a summer as cool as that of England, and an autumn balmy and yet fresh beyond perhaps any other in the East. The second variety prevails on the lower western slopes and in most of the maritime belt, as also throughout the plain of Esdraelon, the western side of Damascus, and the valley of the Jordan. In the whole of these, the summer heat is clammy and oppressive, though very fertilising, and both summer and winter—the latter of which is very mild—have

their rainy seasons. Much of the coast district, too, is malarious, the neighbourhoods of Alexandretta and Tripoli being the worst in this respect, while Suedia and Beyrout enjoy almost entire exemption from this drawback. In south-eastern Syria and most of central and southern Palestine, the warm and dry climate is prevalent, affording a mild winter with a slight rainfall and even occasional snow, followed by a very warm summer deprived of all moisture by parching desert winds, which, while it lasts, dries up all the smaller streams, and, except along the larger ones, scorches out every green thing. July and August are the hottest months, with an average mean temperature—as taken at Jerusalem at sunset—of 79°, and January the coldest, with a (sunrise) coldest mean of 49° Fahr. Throughout both sections, in fact, the temperature depends on the elevation and the nature of the soil; and with such variety in these before him, the tourist who seeks to make a lengthened halt in either can practically choose his own climate.

CHAPTER VI.

WESTERN ARABIA.

The least important of the five divisions—But as the cradle of Islâm, the most valued—*Prestige* of its sovereignty—Fiscally, a loss to the Porte—Its limits and special features—The Hedjaz, except the desert, the most arid tract in all Arabia—The Belâd-el-Harâm—Mecca and Medina—The great Hadj—Yemen, the old Arabia Felix—The Porte's authority here less established—Also a fiscal loss—The Tehamah—Ports of the division—The native "sultanates"—Lack of rivers and lakes—Islands along the coast.

EXCEPT as the cradle, and still containing the central shrine of Islâm, this last of the five divisions of the Porte's Asiatic dominions is the least interesting and valuable, as it is the smallest, of the whole. Apart from Mohammed, it may be said to have no history; for the most part it has few or no natural resources; and were it not that in the East the relation of politics to religion is so close, it would be as politically as it is commercially unimportant. In the eyes of all Moslems, however, one small district of it transcends in value the richest province of the empire. What Jerusalem is to the Christian, Mecca is a hundredfold to every believer in the Prophet from the Danube to the Yellow Sea; in the sovereignty over it the title to the Caliphate itself in a

great degree depends, and, with this last, the influence of the Sultan over the whole Soonee Mussulman world. Since 1517, when the Ottomans first acquired the Hedjaz as part of the Egyptian territory then conquered by Selim I., to which the victories of his son and successor Solyman added Yemen and the whole coast from Suez to Aden, this highest prerogative of the Sultan's, then first assumed, has been twice imperilled by a Wahabite and Egyptian occupation of the Holy Cities, and in compelling the surrender of these by Mehemet Ali in 1840 as a condition of the treaty of that year, England did the Porte a better service than even in restoring to it Syria. Fiscally, it is true, the whole section is worth less than nothing, as, independently of the heavy yearly subsidy to Mecca, the cost of its administration very considerably exceeds the scanty revenue it produces. The deficit, however, is more than recouped by the *prestige* of its possession ; and the Porte would rather lose its richest other province, than the sterile tract that incloses the birth and burial-places of the Prophet—the two sacredest spots on earth to every Moslem believer.

The territory to which this peculiar value attaches, forms the eastern coast of the Red Sea from the little port of Moilah (27° 40′ N. lat.)[1] northwards, down to a vaguely settled point near Aden (12° 50′),

[1] The Egyptian territory, including the peninsula of Sinai and the mountainous tract east and south-east of the Gulf of Akaba, extends down to this point.

with a length of about 1,200 miles and a width varying from 60 to 150 miles from the sea to the western limits of the Nejd. This long belt consists, seawards, of a strip of, for the most part, sandy and barren plain, backed inland by a hilly plateau, or low mountain chain, nowhere exceeding 2,000 feet in height, and fringed eastwards by a ridge of bare fantastic rocks. The northern portion of this, from Moilah down to Halli (about 20° N. lat.), forms the province of the Hedjaz. In this, almost the only vegetation is found round widely scattered wells, whose brackish water, supplemented by a few streams formed by the spring rains, but which rapidly dry up under the great summer heat, supplies the sole irrigation of this part of the country. Except, indeed, the actual desert, the Hedjaz is the most arid and sterile tract in the whole Arabian peninsula. The southern half of this desolate province, a few miles in from the coast, is marked off as the Belâd-el-Harâm (the sacred territory), which forms the grand Sherifate, including the holy cities of Medina (13° 21′ N. lat.) and Mecca (21° 33′), the former of which lies 140 miles inland at the northern base of the Jebel-Kora, and the latter forty miles from its port of Djedda, in a bleak and rocky plain—the holiest ground in all Islâm. "Medina-el-Nebby" (the City of the Prophet), which contains Mohammed's tomb,[1] has a population of about 20,000,

[1] As also those of his daughter, Fatima, and Abu-bekr and Omar, his two immediate successors.

and is perhaps the only town in the East from which dogs are excluded. It is surrounded by a fine belt of gardens, watered by a stream that runs down from the Jebel-el-Kora, to which, in winter, the torrent of the Seyl-el-Medina adds a further abundant supply. The trifling trade of the place is carried on through the small port of Yembo, and during the Hadj season with the pilgrim caravans, which here, as at Mecca, combine commerce with religion in nearly equal measure. Mecca itself, the still holier birthplace of the prophet, stands in a sandy valley separated from the eastern desert by a barren chain of hills ranging from 200 to 500 feet high. Burckhardt and Captain Burton are the only Europeans who have ever visited this *sanctum sanctorum* of Islâm, and to their works I refer the reader who cares for details of the Ca'aba, with its famous black stone which was already an object of pagan worship centuries before Mohammed was born. Enough here to say that the city has a normal population of about 30,000, which swells during the pilgrim season to 150,000 or even 200,000, and that such trade as it has passes through Djedda, inland of which non-Mussulmans may not safely penetrate more than fifteen or twenty miles.

To the general sterility of this dreary region there are, however, a few exceptions. Of these, the most important are the district of the Jebel-Sobh, about halfway between Medina and Yembo; the Wady

Fatima, on the Hadj route thirty miles north of Mecca, and Taïf, seventy miles south-east of the latter city. All three of these are well watered, partly by rivulets from the adjoining hills, and partly by wells, and produce in abundance grain, vegetables, and nearly every kind of fruit. Their vegetation, however, only heightens, by contrast, the effect of the general barrenness elsewhere. The routes which traverse this region are, of course, merely camel-tracks, the most important of which is the great pilgrim line from Syria and Egypt. The direction of this, as indeed of the whole, is determined by the wells or other watering-places along the route. Thirty of these occur between Damascus, and thirty-five between Cairo and Mecca; each being a day's journey, averaging about twenty-five miles. The great majority of Egyptian pilgrims, however, including nearly all from the Barbary States and most of those from European Turkey and Asia Minor, now avoid this long land journey by shipping at Suez for Djedda, whence the short distance of forty miles is either walked or ridden on mules.

Below Halli begins Yemen, the old Arabia Felix, with a population of about 1,000,000. This section, as before remarked, extends down to near Aden, with an average width slightly exceeding that of the Hedjaz, and backed like the latter by low mountain ridges separating it from the great highland waste of the Nejd. Here the sovereignty of the Porte is

much less firmly established. It is indeed only within the past ten years that any systematic attempt has been made to restore it, after a *déchéance* of nearly two centuries and a half since the expulsion of the Turks from the country in 1630, when a general uprising of the native chiefs drove out the conquerors, and re-established the score or more of Arab principalities which the conquest of Solyman had overthrown.[1] It was not till 1868 that the Porte revived its old claim, and in the following three or four years again occupied the ports below Djedda, and from them gradually re-subjugated the interior As yet, however, the effort has not been wholly successful, and, as in the northern province, the cost of administration exceeds the revenue received. Here again, also, there are two natural divisions of the country—the upper, or mountain, districts eastwards, called Yemen Proper; and the Tehâmah, or low country, which stretches in a varying breadth of from thirty to eighty miles between the former and the sea. This name of Tehamah is sometimes applied to the whole seaboard from Moilah to Aden, but its use is more properly confined to that of the

[1] More than a century later, when Niebuhr visited the country in 1741, he found it organised as a sort of confederation of thirty self-governing provinces under the supremacy of the Imaum of Sanâ. These were subsequently reduced by the encroachments of the Wahabites in the north-east, and by the British occupation of Aden, till in 1871 a Turkish army captured Sanâ, and put an end to the dynasty of the Imaums. In the interior, however, as remarked in the text, the native chiefs still pay scant allegiance, and less revenue, to the Porte.

southern province only. This long tract bears every mark of having been anciently a part of the bed of the sea, from which it has gradually emerged. The soil is interspersed with marine fossils and other *exuviæ*, and contains large strata of salt, which in some places shoot up into hills; and as the sea continues to recede, the Tehamah extends its limits in proportion. It is, however, much less barren than the corresponding belt of the Hedjaz, and being better watered—with a slight rainfall in spring, and by the periodical rains which begin in June and end in September, feeding many rivulets that last throughout most of the year—many parts of it produce plentiful crops, and afford good pasturage to numerous flocks and herds. It also contains several relatively prosperous towns and hamlets along the coast, including the ports of Loheïa, Hodeïda, Beït-el-Fakih, and Mocha, of whose trade some account will be given in a subsequent chapter. The mountain districts inland are still more generally fertile. These extend along the crest and both slopes of the chain that traverses the country in a south-easterly direction, and form the best part of Arabia Felix. The climate here is much cooler than in the sultry plains of the Tehamah, and as the region is well watered by numerous small streams, most of its surface blooms with healthy and abundant vegetation.[1] Here, however, the recognition of the

[1] In one of the most fertile of these eastern districts, the Wady Nejrán, a custom still prevails which illustrates the

Porte's authority is hardly even nominal; the native chiefs, locally called "Sultans," still exercise their old patriarchal sovereignty, and the writ of the Padishah runs little beyond the range of his cannon. The extreme south-eastern strip, called the Belád-Aden, begins at the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and, inclosed on the north by the range of Jebel-Jafa, extends round for 130 miles to Cape Seïlan, east of Aden, including Aden itself, and the English-protected "Sultanate" of Lahaj. East of this begins the other section of Arabia Felix, Hadramaut, which skirts the Indian Ocean nearly round to the Persian Gulf, far beyond even the pretension of Ottoman sovereignty, and as to which, therefore, nothing need be here said.

In common with the rest of Arabia, these Turkish provinces are almost wholly destitute of rivers. From the Gulf of Akaba to Bab-el-Mandeb, not even a rivulet enters the Red Sea. Inland, a stream called the Bichet rises in the district of Sanâ, in northern Yemen, and flows eastward to Lake Salomé in the great interior tract of the Yemamah; but, except this and the Euphrates, which washes the eastern side of the peninsula for nearly 1,000 miles, there is no other considerable river within its limits. Modern travel has also reduced the many lakes laid down by

extreme simplicity of their social life. When a man goes on a journey, he sends his wife to the house of a friend, who, it is understood, must in all respects supply the husband's place, and restore the lady on his return.

Greek and Turkish cartographers to two,—that of Salomé, just mentioned, and Lake Warada, in the Wády Sobeyh, about halfway between the former and the Red Sea.

Numerous groups of small islands, for the most part desert, skirt the littoral from Moilah to Bab-el-Mandeb, especially along the Tehamah: the whole are either volcanic[1] or coral formations, and greatly obstruct coast navigation. Perim, whose occupation by a detachment of the Aden garrison gives the British the command of "the Gate of Tears" (Bab-el-mandeb) is a barren islet on the eastern side of the strait, about three miles from the mainland. Of the hundreds of others higher up, Kamran, between Loheïa and Hodeïda, is almost the only one possessing a practicable port, and which is therefore of any commercial value.

[1] One, Jebel Teer, nearly in mid-sea off Loheïa, is an active volcano, 900 feet high.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST.

A work of three centuries—Collapse and division of the Seljuk monarchy—Ertogrul—Othman invades Nicomedia—Orchan conquers Brousa—Founds corps of Janizaries—Marries daughter of Emperor Cantacuzene—Murad I. conquers Macedonia and Thrace —Bayazid I. annexes all northern and eastern Anatolia—Defeated and captured by Tamerlane at Angora—Revival of Ottoman power under Mohammed I. after withdrawal of Moguls—Murad II. extends conquests in Asia and Europe—Mohammed II. conquers Constantinople, Trebizond, and Armenia—Conquest of Asia Minor completed by Bayazid II.—Selim I. conquers Syria, Egypt, and the Hedjaz—Becomes first Ottoman Caliph—Solyman I. conquers northern Kurdistan and Rhodes—Selim II. acquires Cyprus and Tunis—Murad III. annexes Mesopotamia—Murad IV. captures Baghdad—Crete taken by Achmet Kiuprili—Settlements on Circassian coast—Ebb in tide of conquest—Nadir Shah recovers Persian provinces—Russia acquires Crimea and the Kuban—Losses consequent on wars of 1829 and 1877-8—Vitality of the dynasty—Its present decrepitude.

THE growth and final establishment of Ottoman sway over this vast extent of territory were the work of more than three hundred years. Beginning with Othman (or Osman), at the close of the thirteenth century, it was only completed by Murad IV., near the middle of the seventeenth, and even then the

subjection imposed on Kurdistan and Arabia was rather nominal than real. Of this long era of conquest, only the meagrest sketch is possible within the limits of space here available; but even this may interest the reader who cares to remember how, out of the wreck of Byzantine and Seljuk dominion, this Asian half of the great Ottoman empire was built up.

On the collapse of the Seljuk monarchy of Roum,[1] at the death of Aladin III., the territory of that kingdom—which included the whole of Asia Minor, except the Byzantine fragment from the banks of the Mæander to the suburbs of Nicomedia, and the dukedom of Trebizond, embracing the belt of seaboard from Sinope to the modern Rhion—was divided amongst the chieftains who had paid feudal service to the late Sultan. Each of these set up for himself, and, from Olympus to the upper Euphrates, the country was thus partitioned amongst ten or a dozen petty emirs.[2] Of these, one of the pettiest was Othman, son of Ertogrul, who, driven from Persia by the advance of the Moguls, had migrated westwards

[1] One of the four states—each ruled by a Seljukian prince—into which the great empire consolidated by Alp Arslan, and extending from Egypt to Samarcand, broke up on the death of Malek Shah. Its capital, originally Nice, till the capture of that city by the Crusaders (A.D. 1097), was Iconium, which frequently gave its name to the kingdom.

[2] The chief amongst these were Karaman, Kermian, Teké, Aïdin, Sarukhan, Sassan (or Sagla), Karadi, and Amut, who gave their names to their principalities,—many of which still survive in the official geography of the Porte.

with a following of only four hundred tents, and, taking service under Aladin, had received from him a small feudal estate near Surgut, on the banks of the Sangarius. Ertogrul died in 1299, shortly after which Othman, tempted by the neglected state of the Greek frontier, invaded and seized a large slice of the neighbouring province of Nicomedia. Twenty-seven years later, his son Orchan conquered Prusa (Brousa) in Bithynia, which became the cradle and first capital of the new empire, whose era properly dates from this event. Othman gave his name to the dynasty, but his greater son was in reality its first sovereign emir,—the modest title of the reigning prince till Bayazid, half a century later, accepted from the Abbasside Caliph of Cairo the higher patent of Sultan.

This energetic prince, who was the first to add an organized infantry force to his irregular squadrons of Turcoman horse, rapidly conquered the whole of Bithynia and the adjoining territory north, west, and south, from the Bosphorus and Hellespont to the bay of Scala Nuova, and, having built a fleet, even seized and for a while held Rhodes. How, as the ally and son-in-law of the Emperor Cantacuzene, he sent an army into Europe and gained the foothold in Thrace which served as a base for the subsequent conquests of Murad and Bayazid, need not here be told. On his death in 1360, the former of these princes carried his victorious standards to Adrianople, and thence reduced almost all Macedonia and

Thrace down to the very gates of Constantinople.[1] In Asia, more than one other principality was similarly absorbed, till, at his death in 1389, nearly half the area of modern Anatolia had been brought under Ottoman rule. The short reign of his son and successor Bayazid—surnamed *Ildermin*, or the Thunderbolt—extended the limits of the new empire still farther eastwards, stripping of their possessions his brother emirs of Castemouni, Kermian, Sivas, Djanik, and Erzinghan—thus reducing more than three-fourths of the whole peninsula to his sway. The dispossessed Begs made common cause with the Greek emperor, and the whole invoked the aid of Tamerlane, the great Mogul chief who, after conquering Persia, Turkestan, and India, had imposed his yoke also on Syria and Baghdad. An embassy sent by him to Bayazid having been insultingly received, the Mogul sovereign crossed the Taurus into Anatolia, and in a battle fought near Angora utterly defeated the Othmans and captured the Sultan himself. The principalities seized by Othman and his successors were restored as tributary fiefs to the heirs of their former owners, and Bayazid, confined in an iron cage, would have been exhibited at Samarcand as the chief trophy of the campaign if death on the way had not saved him from this indignity.

[1] This prince it was who, in 1362, founded the famous militia of the Janizaries, recruited from the finest of his Christian male captives, and maintained by a yearly youth-tax levied from his non-Moslem subjects.

With the return, however, of the conqueror to Turkestan, the prostrate Ottoman power revived. "The massy trunk (says Gibbon) was bent to the ground, but no sooner did the hurricane pass away, than it again rose with fresh vigour and more lively vegetation." But a series of civil wars between the sons of the late sovereign delayed the reunion of the empire for nearly eighteen years, at the end of which Mohammed I., the youngest of the three brothers, obtained Anatolia by treaty and Romania (as the European provinces were then called) by arms. His son, Murad II., then succeeded to an undivided empire in 1421, and led his Janizaries to new conquests in both Europe and Asia. In the latter, the independent principality of Aïdin was wrested, in 1426, from the family of the Aïdin-Oghli, who had held it for more than a century and a quarter, and the coast-line was thus extended southwards from Smyrna to Boudroum. To him, in 1451, succeeded Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople, whose overthrow of the Byzantine power in Europe was followed eight years later (1461) by the conquest of the Greek dukedom or empire of Trebizond. He had previously wrested from Ismail Beg the rich emirlik of Sinope, and so completed the chain of his sovereignty along the northern coast from the Bosphorus to the Rhion. Armenia fell with Trebizond, and the seizure (in 1475) of Konia and Caraman entailed the subjection of the whole principality of Caramania, except the fragment round Selefkeh, on

the coast, with the seizure of which, ten years later by Bayazid II., the conquest of Asia Minor was complete. In the Archipelago, too, Mohammed drove the Venetians out of Mytilene, but an attempt to recover Rhodes failed, the final capture of that rich island being reserved for the more brilliant generalship of Solyman.

Selim I., who succeeded Bayazid in 1512, carried his arms across the Taurus and speedily overran the upper valley of the Tigris and the country round Lake Van. Being thus brought into conflict with Shah Ismaïl Sofi of Persia, he met and defeated that prince in a great battle in the plain of Gialderan, and as a result of the victory occupied Tabreez. The news, however, of a revolt of the Janizaries recalled him to Anatolia, where, at Amasia, he suppressed the mutiny by massacring nearly one half of the turbulent corps. Abandoning his project of Persian conquest, he next year led a large army into Syria, which was then held by the Egyptian Sultan Cansou, a close ally of Shah Ismaïl. In a battle fought before Aleppo the Mamluke prince was killed, and without further resistance that city, Damascus, and Jerusalem opened their gates to the victor. A year later, in 1517, this important conquest was followed up by that of Egypt itself, when Toman Bey, the successor of Cansou, was hanged at Cairo, and Caliph Motowakkel, the last of the Abbassides, carried to Constantinople, and there forced to renounce his pontificate in favour of the Ottoman sovereign, in

whose dynasty the sacred and secular supremacy in Islâm has thus since been combined.[1]

The conquest of Egypt entailed that of its dependency, the Hedjaz, and of most of the Arabian seaboard down to Mocha, but a completer subjection of the whole was effected by Solyman (Suleiman) the Magnificent, who succeeded his father Selim in 1520,[2] and in whose reign the Ottoman empire reached, both in Europe and Asia, the zenith of its splendour and power. On the continent, this great prince pushed his frontier eastwards to Erivan and northern Kurdistan, and in the Ægean, as already narrated, wrested Rhodes from the Knights of St. John, and from the Venetians such of the other islands up to Mytilene as then remained in their hands. To this insular galaxy, Selim II. added Cyprus in 1570, and, though disastrously beaten by Don John of Austria in the great sea-fight of Lepanto in the following year, drove the Spaniards out of Tunis in 1574. But these African, equally with the European, conquests of the dynasty lie outside the scope of this rapid sketch, and need not therefore be further mentioned. Murad III., who succeeded his father in 1575, is to be credited with Mesopotamia as far south as Mosul, won from the Persians; but it was not till after the short and inglorious reigns of

[1] See Appendix.

[2] The Turks were, however, driven out of Yemen in 1630 by a native Imaum called Khasim, whose successors held the province till 1870, when the Porte despatched an army from Syria, and reconquered the whole down to Bab-el-Mandeb.

Mohammed III., Achmet I., and Mustapha I., that Murad IV. resumed the *rôle* of conqueror, and by recovering Baghdad from the same hereditary foes in 1638—when he cruelly massacred 30,000 of the surrendered garrison and inhabitants—completed the stretch of Ottoman dominion from the Black Sea to the Gulf. With the exception of Crete, which, after a tedious siege of more than twenty years, was captured by the Grand Vizier Achmet Kiuprili in 1669, this was the last Turkish conquest made out of Europe, for although the actual subjection of Kurdistan and the recovery of Yemen have been the work of the past forty years, both these provinces have ranked as Ottoman territory since the much remoter dates mentioned above. Similarly, though the Taurus Turcomans of the Kozan-dagh and the Ghiaour-dagh enjoyed a sort of feudal independence down to 1863, the Sultan's firman "ran" through all Caramania since Adana and Selefkeh fell to Bayazid. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, when the Crescent had already passed its military zenith, several points were colonized on the Circassian coasts—at Gelandjik, Soukoum-Kalé, Anapa, and elsewhere—but, although the Porte afterwards based on the possession of these stations a claim to sovereignty over the whole coast, their real object was to facilitate and regulate the white slave traffic on which the harems of Byzantium and of Stamboul had alike depended for their supplies.

Thus, on the foundation laid by a petty chieftain

with a smaller following than that of many a Kurdish or Arab sheikh of the present day, was built up, in Asia alone, an empire larger than Spain, France and Austria combined. From the Bosphorus to Georgia, and from the eastern corner of the Black Sea to the Persian Gulf, Ottoman power was supreme, or disputed only by a few barbarous tribes. After exactly a century, however, the ebb in this long tide of conquest began. In 1738, Nadir Shah recovered Georgia, Erivan, Azerbijan, Kermanshah, and the other districts in Persia which had been in turn absorbed, and established substantially the border that has since divided the two countries. Fifty-four years later, the treaty of Jassy surrendered to Russia the Crimea and the Kuban, with such rights as the Porte claimed to have over the rest of the Circassian seaboard. The war of 1829 further gave the Czar Akhaltsik and the slice of country inclosing it, from Gumri to the Rhion, and pushed the Caucasian frontier westwards from close behind Ani to the near neighbourhood of Batoum. To this the treaty of Berlin has now added Kars, with Ardahan, Olti, Atvin, and Batoum itself, with 10,000 square miles of surrounding territory—or an area nearly as large as continental Greece. Kotour and the small district round it have been re-adjudged by the same pact to Persia; but as that blundering piece of diplomacy omitted to define the limits of this particular "rectification" of frontier, the Porte will probably allege its inability to make it till yet another Turco-

Persian Boundary Commission has been named, and years hence has decided what the new marches hereabouts are to be.

Not the least noteworthy feature in this long process of territorial evolution is the fact that the whole has been accomplished under one single dynasty. From 1299, when the "Bone-breaker" first fixed the roots of his line at Yenishehr, till the present, the family chain has never once been broken —a continuity of succession that makes Abdul Hamid the representative of the oldest among modern imperial or royal houses, except one—the Hapsburgs. The Mantchoo line of Chinese emperors dates only from the beginning of the seventeenth century: the present royal family of Prussia is not yet ninety years old: the Romanoffs became extinct in 1732, and the Holstein-Gottorp Czars cannot therefore yet boast a century and a half's history. The Bourbons first blossomed into royalty in 1589, and our own House of Hanover, as everybody knows, in 1714; while not merely the ancestry, but the sovereign rule, of the Ottoman Sultans extends back, in uninterrupted male descent, for nearly six hundred years. The fact that these last have, for more than three centuries and a half, been regarded by their co-religionist subjects not merely as secular emperors but as Popes of Islâm, has doubtless been amongst the contributing causes of this great dynastic vitality. But the Caliphs, both of Baghdad and Egypt, enjoyed the same advantage, yet it availed to preserve

neither in more than nominal dominion for a third of the long sovereign career of their Turcoman successors. Besides, however, what may be called the accidents of history, dynasties, like individuals, carry within them the seeds of decay, which develop rapidly or slowly according to the original strength or weakness of their constitution and to the manner and conditions of their life. With the Ottomans, the first of these was undoubtedly robust; but with the decline of the military and religious spirit that once threatened all Europe, the vital energy of the family has waned, and every generation of it during the last century and a half has increasingly shown those signs of growing decrepitude which—unless arrested by some organic and revolutionary remedy—forbode a not remote dissolution. It remains to be seen, during the next half score of years, whether the new British alliance will avail to supply this powerful restorative, and, in Asia at least, give to both the dynasty and the empire, as an independent Mussulman nation, a fresh lease of life; or whether these historic lands are to be the scene of yet another political transformation fraught with greater benefits to themselves and to civilisation than any they have yet witnessed. The solution of the problem cannot be very long deferred.

CHAPTER VIII.

RACES.

In all, nearly a dozen—Total population—The *Turks*—Von Hammer's pedigree of the original stock—Migration from Persia to Armenia and Asia Minor—The modern race ethnically composite—Its distribution—The *Armenians*—Their own legendary origin—Resemblance to the Jews—Conquest of their kingdom by the Caliphs—Brief re-establishment in the Taurus—Their social divisions—How now distributed—Their character—The *Kurds*—Obscurity of their origin—Present total—Two classes—Imperfect subjection to Ottoman authority—Character and mode of life little changed since Xenophon—Their raids on the Armenians frequent, but exaggerated—The *Greeks*—Descendants of the old colonists, mixed with those of converts during Byzantine empire—Chiefly settled along seaboard—Form great majority of population in Archipelago—Their occupations—*Syrians*—Also mixed—Physical similarity of Christians and Moslems—Their total, how composed—The *Arabs*—Fellahs and Bedoween, their separate descent—The principal nomadic tribes—Tribal government—Their lapse to primitive modes of life after fall of the Caliphate—Their character—No love for the Turks—The *Circassians*—Brigands in Turkey, as at home—Still sell their daughters—The *Turcomans*—Cognate with the Ottomans—Some settled; others, as of old, still pastoral robbers—The *Jews*—Majority now foreigners—Small native remnant of in Palestine and round Damascus—Chiefly urban, and on level with other Rayahs—*Tartars* and *Gipsies*—The former, the outcome of immigrations from Crimea; the latter, same as everywhere else—The whole of these races resolve into Mussulmans and Rayahs—Their relation to the Government, and effect of Rayah subordination.

THE population of Asiatic Turkey is as mixed as its physical features are varied. The motley tale

comprises nearly a dozen elements, all differing more or less in descent, language, and social habits; and though subject, most of them, to the same rule for nearly six hundred years, they still present few or none of the kindred features that combine to form a national character. Thus, the aggregate includes Turks, Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, Arabs, Syrians, Turcomans, Jews, Tartars, Circassians, Gipsies, and other nondescripts, originally brought together by immigration and conquest, and linked by force of government into an empire, but as unfused into a *nation* as before the victories of Alp Arslan. The total of these ethnic groups has been variously reckoned at from 13,000,000 to 18,000,000; but little more than a mean of these extremes—or at most 16,500,000—would, I believe, approximate more nearly than either to the true number of the whole. A collation of the official and other calculations gives something like the following partition of this aggregate among its component elements:—

Turks	10,000,000
Armenians	2,000,000
Kurds	1,250,000
Greeks	1,000,000
Syrians	1,000,000
Arabs	700,000
Circassians	350,000
Turcomans	90,000
Jews	60,000
Tartars, Gipsies, &c.	50,000
Total	16,500,000[1]

[1] From this total have now to be deducted the inhabitants of the sanjaks of Batoum and Kars, lost by the late war. These may be roughly estimated at about 250,000, of whom the majority are Mussulmans.

The *Turks*, who thus form nearly two-thirds of the whole—comprising under this common appellation not merely the descendants of the original invaders, but the much larger element of the native races who in turn embraced the faith and assumed the name of their conquerors—preponderate chiefly in Asia Minor, which for more than six centuries has been the special home of this composite race. Their more accurate designation, and that which they give to themselves, is Osmanlis or Ottomans,[1] to distinguish them from the semi-barbarous Turcomans, Tartars, and other branches of the great cognate family of nations scattered from time immemorial throughout Western Asia, and of which " Turk " or " Toork " is the proper generic name.[2] The whole—exclusive, of course, of the large converted native element—were formerly considered members of the Caucasian group, but later researches have identified them with the Hiong-nu, a people who inhabited North-western China long before the Christian era, and migrated thence westward till they finally settled where their various descendants now are. The Osmanli—or Ottoman—Turks, and their brethren of Kazan, Astrakan, and the Crimea, have many physical characteristics of the Caucasian stock ; but the Nogaïs, Kirghiz, Turcomans,

[1] From Othman, or Osman, the founder of their dynasty.

[2] The Tartar legend, recorded by D'Herbelot, is that the whole race descends and takes its name from Turk, the eldest son of Japhet, the son of Noah, who at his death bequeathed to his heir the wide stretch of territory since known as Turkestan, whence his descendants spread over the whole of Western Asia.

and others farther east, approach more nearly to the Mongolian type. The accepted theory therefore is, that the whole family is of Mongolian origin, and that the Caucasian features which the Ottomans now undoubtedly possess are the result of intermixture with the peoples whom they gradually invaded and subdued. Von Hammer traces the pedigree of the race out of the mist of legend and tradition into the light of history, and finds that by the dawn of this—in their case—tribe after tribe of it had already poured down from the slopes of the Altaï on the rich lands and tempting wealth of the southern and western regions, in which the power of the early Caliphs and the Greek emperors had alike decayed. The Oghuzes halted for a while and became dominant in Turkestan ; while another branch, the Seljuks—named after their Khan—pushed further westwards, and, having embraced Islamism, early in the tenth century founded in Persia the dynasty of shepherd kings whose empire endured for nearly four hundred years, and extended from Turkestan to the Mediterranean. From Turkestan the Oghuzes—who in the ninth century had also adopted the faith of the Prophet and taken the name of Turcomans, to distinguish them from the other septs of their race who remained infidels—carried their flocks, some to the eastern shores of the Caspian, and others into Armenia, and so became divided into the "eastern" and "western" branches of the tribe. Of the latter a portion proceeded into

Persia and attached themselves to the service of the Carizmian sultan of that country, till its conquest by Tamerlane forced their chief, Solyman, into a fresh migration, with 50,000 followers, with whom he settled for a few years in Armenia. Thence the tribe resumed its march, following the course of the Euphrates, towards Aleppo, till, in crossing the river, Solyman was drowned. With his death the history of the Ottoman Turks may be said to begin. The tribe at once dispersed, one portion of it proceeding into Syria and another into Asia Minor, where their descendants as Turcomans still wander with their flocks and herds, as the season changes, from mountain to plain; a third followed two of Solyman's four sons back into Persia; and a fourth, consisting only of four hundred families, retraced its way with two other sons, Dundar and Ertogrul, to the great plains of Erzeroum and Pasin. These last it was who grew into the sovereign race which till last year ruled Europe and Asia from the Adriatic and the Danube to the Persian Gulf. Only a very small minority of the 10,000,000 so-called "Turks" in Asia can, of course, claim to be of pure Ottoman descent—the remainder representing, as above remarked, the gains from voluntary or enforced conversions amongst the subjected populations which, with the natural growth of the fused posterity of the whole, gradually swelled the census-roll of the dominant race to its present strength.

As regards the distribution of this chief element

of the Asiatic population, the absence of statistics again precludes anything but an approximate statement. It can, therefore, be only roughly said that about two-thirds of the whole are settled in Asia Minor, 1,500,000 in Armenia and Kurdistan, 750,000 in Mesopotamia and Babylonia, 500,000 in Syria and Palestine, and the remainder in the Hedjaz. These figures lay no claim to precision, but may be accepted as proximate estimates of the fact. It remains to add that the Turks in all five of these divisions live mainly in the towns, and as a rule only follow agriculture in the outlying villages in districts where they are in a large majority. Physically they are the finest of these Asiatic populations, being nearly all above the middle height, powerfully built, and, notwithstanding all half-informed commonplaces to the contrary, are as robustly healthy as long centuries of temperance and general morality can make a race.[1]

According to their own legendary history, the *Armenians*, who rank next in number and importance, are the descendants of Haïk, a son of Togarmah, grandson of Japhet, who fled from Babylon to escape the tyranny of Belus twenty-two centuries before Christ, and settled in the country which in their language still bears their progenitor's

[1] I say nothing here of the Lazis, who give their name to the wild district between Trebizond and Batoum. Ethnically, they differ widely from the pure Turk; but being nominal Mussulmans of a very fanatical type, they fell—till the transfer of most of them to Russia with Batoum—within the crowd of nondescripts who swell the Moslem total to 10,000,000.

name (Haïkhasdan). The popular name of Aram, however, appears to be derived from Aram, the sixth successor of Haïk and contemporary of Ninus, though Strabo derives it from Armenus, one of the Argonauts, and considers the people themselves to have migrated from Thessaly. Herodotus, on the other hand, in mentioning that a body of them served in the army of Xerxes, expresses an opinion that they were originally Phrygians; while yet another theory is that they are the descendants of the lost Ten Tribes; and for this there is the colour of a close resemblance in feature and many points of character and condition to the Jews. Like the latter, they present the phenomenon of a race dispersed throughout the world, intermingling, but never fusing, with other peoples; immutably attached to their hereditary faith, and cherishing in secret the hope of a national restoration, for which, slight as may be the prospect of it, they are certainly more fitted than any other Rayah race. Be their precise origin, however, what it may, it is at least clear that they belong to the Indo-European family, and both Pritchard and Ritter regard them as a branch of the stock of the people of Iran, though separated from them at a very early period. The country originally formed a vast kingdom, which underwent and survived numberless convulsions of foreign conquest and internal division, till, towards the end of the tenth century, most of it had been subjugated by the Caliphs and overrun by Islamism. A portion of the nation, however, took

refuge in the northern districts between Ani and Kars, and for nearly a century maintained a more or less independent existence, till this last kingdom, that bore the name of Armenia, was ravaged and seized by the Moguls. In the general dispersion that followed, some of the petty princes who escaped the sword of the conquerors fled as far as Cilicia, and there founded, at Tarsus, a small state, which bravely maintained itself in the midst of the Greeks and the Moslems of Iconium and Syria till extinguished by the Sultan of Cairo near the close of the fourteenth century, when its last king, Leo VI.—not an Armenian himself, but a prince of the House of Lusignan, then reigning in Cyprus—died at Paris in exile, in 1393. Since then, the political history of the race has been lost in that of the Turks, whose language, costume, and habits they adopted, without, however, sacrificing their faith. The nation, as they still call themselves, may be divided into four classes—the clergy, the literary or professional class, the *saraffs* or bankers, and the tradesmen and artisans. Of these the *saraffs*, from their wealth and intimate relation with the Pashas, are the most influential, and are responsible for many of the administrative abuses which affect not merely their own community but all classes of the population. As provincial usurers, especially, they are the source and agents of more misery and oppression to the agricultural peasantry—both Mussulman and Christian—than all official misfeasance combined. More than half the desolation

that meets the eye of a traveller through the interior is traceable to their rapacity, their rules of usury varying from thirty to even a hundred per cent., and their mercilessness in enforcing payment exceeding that of a mediæval Jew. The whole race is now estimated to number about 4,000,000,[1] of whom half are in Asiatic Turkey, 450,000 in Constantinople and Roumelia, 1,000,000 in Russia, 400,000 in Persia, 40,000 in Continental India and the Asian Archipelago, 25,000 in Austria, Italy, and Holland, and the remainder scattered elsewhere. The majority of the race in these Asiatic provinces still occupy the ancient territory of their forefathers in the sacred neighbourhood of Ararat; and in the three great vilayets of Erzeroum, Van, and Diarbekir, they preserve a numerical superiority over both Turks and Turcomans.[2] Anciently brave and warlike, they have in modern times been distinguished for an

[1] This estimate is based on a census of the families of the nation in Turkey, multiplied by five. But as families among the rural population often include not merely the parents and children of one generation but those of two or even three, all residing under one roof, this computation is fallacious, and any return based upon it below the truth. The real total of the Armenian community in Turkey, and therefore of the nation throughout the world, must be considerably more than that stated in the text.

[2] How little the social life of these provinces has changed since the days of Xenophon may be inferred from the still common underground villages, especially in the neighbourhood of Erzeroum, in which the descendants of the tribes described in the *Anabasis* still burrow exactly as did their ancestors 2,300 years ago.

exceptionally peaceful character and for submissiveness to the government of every country in which they live. They have, in fact, lost all trace of their old military spirit, and have sunk into agriculturists, traders, petty-craftsmen, and money-dealers as sordid and withal as crafty as the Jews. Lamartine has well called them the Swiss of the East: "Industrious, peaceable, and regular in their habits, they resemble them also in calculation and love of gain. They have nothing heroic in their nature; commerce is their god, and they would engage in it under any master." The best features of the race, however, belong rather to the rural than to the urban classes; for, transplanted from the simplicity of an agricultural life to the unhealthy influences of Constantinople and the larger towns of the Levant, the Armenian (as indeed, too, the Turk) speedily degenerates, and, along with most of his national customs, loses also much of the energy and nearly all the manly instincts of his race. But even in the cities they remain zealously faithful to the national religion, and next after the Turks, are the most temperate and generally moral section of the population. They have long been, and still are, trusted and employed by the Porte above any other class of its non-Mussulman subjects. Within recent years, members of the nation—alone among the Rayah communities[1]—

[1] Since this was written, Caratheodori and Savas Pashas, the former a Greek and the latter a Slav Catholic, have respectively received portfolios as Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Public Works.

have risen to the rank of Cabinet Ministers; and in the provincial administration on both sides of the Bosphorus they enter much more largely into the machinery of government than either Greeks or Jews. Altogether, their political solidarity with the Turk is closer than that of any other subject race of the empire. What social merits they have, too, they share with the Mussulmans around them; their vices are their own. Nor are they the while subject to any disadvantages, civil or otherwise; on the contrary, their exemption from military service (purchased by a small exemption-tax), their many "national" privileges, and their faculty of appeal—denied to their Moslem neighbours—to foreign consuls, ambassadors, and newspapers, would render them objects of envy instead of compassion, if the same effective remedy were not available to all other Rayahs—only—of whatever race or creed.

Unlike both the Osmanlis and the Armenians, the wild and warlike *Kurds* have no literature, and their race history is therefore still more obscure. On the strength, mainly, of their peculiar idiom, Pritchard claims them as a branch of the great Aryan family, descendants of the Parthians, who at an early period spread over Assyria and Mesopotamia. Certain it is that they are the lineal posterity of Xenophon's Carduchians, and that even in these modern days of firearms, when the matchlock or the rifle has almost everywhere replaced the javelin and the bow, many of them are still famous for the old Parthian skill in

horsemanship and archery. The whole race is variously estimated at between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000, who are divided into the *kocher*, or nomad tribes, chiefly pastoral, and the *guran*, who are settled in villages and engaged in agriculture. A large proportion of the former oscillate between the Turkish and Persian sides of the frontier, and pay only a very shadowy allegiance to either Sultan or Shah. The convenience of pasture or their good or bad relations with the local authorities determine their movements, and so their Ottoman or Persian "nationality" for the time. The consequences of embroilment with Pasha or Khan, as the case may be, are easily evaded by a migration across the border, on either side of which they are secure against pursuit till the temporary trouble has blown by and it suits them, or not, to return. Practically, indeed, the only authority acknowledged by either *kocher* or *guran* is that of their own chiefs, who now, nearly as when the Ten Thousand fought their way through from Cunaxa, are supreme for all purposes of tribal rule. A severe blow to this old system of *Derè-beg* independence was struck by the Porte about forty years ago, when, on the occasion of the revolt of Mohammed Beg of Rowanduz, a strong expedition under Reshid Pasha overran the country on the Turkish side of the border, and imposed on the whole the forms at least of Ottoman administration. But in many districts the new governors were perforce the local chiefs, who continued their old feudal rule in the new character

of mudir or caimacam; while in others, where a Turk was appointed, almost his only function was—and still is—to collect and send to Mosul or Diarbekir as much of the light taxes as he could induce his wild *administrés* to pay. In this latter case, it was neither safe nor expedient for the Stamboulee Bey or Effendi to assert any more vigorous authority. Their proper region now forms a separate vilayet, or province, as ostensibly ruled by its vali and his staff of subordinate functionaries as Brousa or Aïdin; but over more than half of it Ottoman sway is a fiction, and the true rulers are still the old native Begs. The fiscal sovereignty of the districts bordering the desert is further shared with the great Bedoween tribe of the Shammar, whose Sheikh levies from both the nomads and settled cultivators a blackmail, partly in money and partly in kind, called *khoova* (price of fraternity), as fixed as, and more regularly paid than, any imposed by the Pasha of the province. With freedom of pasturage assured to them by this tribute, the nomads descend in winter to the plains, and in single clans or even families sometimes wander as far south as the Persian Gulf or westwards to Syria and Asia Minor, in both of which there are also many settled villages of the race. In summer they return to the mountains, in the cool upper glens of which their flocks and herds find abundant grass and water till the great heat of the plains is past, when the downward migration again takes place. The manner of life of these wanderers differs but little from that of the Bedoween, with

whom the *kocher* Kurd, except in that he is fiercer and more faithless, has many features of life and character in common. Like the Arab, he is hospitable, is nearly always armed and mounted, and, regarding fighting and plunder as the only occupations worthy of his nobler self, he throws the meaner work of attending to the cattle and the whole drudgery of family life both in camp and on the march upon his women—to whom, otherwise, both Arab and Kurd are kind. The settled tribes are only a shade less savage than their nomad race-fellows; nor in this respect are the Nestorian Christians of Julamerk much in advance of the nominal Mussulmans of Jezireh and Rowanduz. Travellers have, in fact, quite as much to fear from either as from the *kockers* between Mosul and Mardin. The villages of these *gurans*, built mostly on the sides of hills, are numerous but small, varying in size from fifteen to forty houses, the fashion of which has but little changed since Xenophon described their prototypes twenty odd centuries ago. They generally consist of one large room roughly constructed either with mud or the worst kind of rubble masonry, and roofed with thick logs of wood covered with several feet of earth, so as to keep out equally the great heat of summer and the severe cold of winter. Inside, this is railed off by low partitions into three or four compartments—according as the house may be comparatively large or small—one or two of which are allotted to the horses and cattle, while a third serves as a store for

fodder, and the fourth as the dwelling chamber of the family. The scanty light is admitted partly through a chimney hole in the roof, and partly through two or three small windows glazed with oil paper. As amongst the Armenians, the women of both the Christian and Mussulman tribes are generally unveiled, and mix freely with the men and women of other families. Physically, the Kurds, both nomadic and settled, are a handsome race, averaging above the middle height, with slim lithe figures, well-cut features, bright black eyes, and sparse or no beards, but long and thick mustaches. The women share the good looks of their kinsmen, and in this respect have much the advantage of the Arabs, amongst whom—out of Egypt—I have seldom seen even a pretty maid in her 'teens. Much has been lately heard of the raids of these reivers on their unwarlike Armenian neighbours, as if the fact, instead of being older than history, were the result of recent weakness or apathy on the part of the Turkish authorities. It is due to the Porte, however, to record that until the necessities of the late war stripped Mosul, Diarbekir, and Van of troops, such forays had for years past become nearly as rare as along our own frontier in the Punjaub. As I know of old, too, when the Armenians have the telling of their own story, they know how to make the most of it. The "lifting" of a flock of sheep or goats not seldom reaches Constantinople and the European newspapers magnified into the sack cf a village, with accompanying "atrocities"

worthy of Eski-Zagra and Batak. These modern Carduchi are bad enough, but they are many shades less black than their Armenian limners paint them.

From the Kurds to the *Greeks*, who stand next on the roll, the transition is abrupt and the distance great, in point equally of race and of civilisation. The latter, of whom much less need be said, are the posterity of the old colonists who peopled the Archipelago and the seaboard round, at intervals, from Caramania to Trebizond, mixed with the descendants of Asiatic tribes converted to Christianity, and amalgamated by ecclesiastical rule in the days of Byzantine supremacy. Except in south-eastern Asia Minor, where they penetrate as far inland as Kaiserieh, they are still mainly confined to the neighbourhood of the coast and the islands, as of old. The Hellenes of Attica and the Morea call them Anatoliotes, and affect to regard them as an inferior race, a pretension which there is little to justify, except that their dialect is less pure than that of the mother-country, and has in some places been more or less superseded by Turkish. They have, too, fused largely with the other European communities of the Levant, but their blood is little, if at all, more mixed than the Albano-Slav-Hellenic compound that now passes for the old classic fluid in Athens itself; while as regards general intellectual activity, commercial subtlety, and most other characteristics of the parent race, most of them are still as

Greek as any subjects of King George.[1] In the islands they form more than three-fourths of the whole population, for although in Crete there is a large Mussulman element, ethnically almost the whole is Albanian Greek, which is there also the tongue of both creeds. A strong tinge of Italian—Genoese or Venetian—blood in most of the other insular members of the race has given them a much gentler temperament than the rough Sclavonic Sphakiotes, whom no concessions can win from chronic revolt; and as, till lately, they enjoyed a large measure of administrative autonomy, they may be regarded as perhaps still the most contented subjects of the Porte. Along the mainland littoral nearly a similar predominance of this element prevails. Smyrna is more Greek than anything else, and the same may also be said of nearly every considerable town thence north and eastwards along the Marmora and on the south Black Sea coast to beyond Trebizond. Inland of this last, many Greek (but Turkish speaking) villages extend as far as Gumush-haneh, beyond which odd families of the race (here called Kroomlees) are met with even in to Erzeroum. Few of the whole engage in agriculture, trade and the mechanical handicrafts being their favourite pursuits. Greek merchants, indeed, are numerous all through Asia Minor, and are established as far south as Mosul and Baghdad; but these last are generally Hellenes

[1] Numerically, they reckon as about 1,000,000 (out of 2,500,000 in all Turkey), against 1,400,000 in free Greece.

or Rayahs of Constantinople, who can hardly be included in the Asiatic million proper of the race.

The modern *Syrians* are a mixed race, made up of the ancient inhabitants of the country crossed with the Arabians and other Moslems who came in with the armies of the Caliphs, and, after settling chiefly in the towns and villages, intermixed with the indigenous population. The foreign element thus introduced was, however, comparatively small, and the consequent mixture of blood affected only a minority of the native inhabitants, and even in them made little or no visible change in the old ethic type. This is seen at once in the striking physical similarity of the native Christians and Moslems, as contrasted with the Jews, Turks, Armenians, and others of alien race settled in the country. The whole population of Syria and Palestine is reckoned at about 2,000,000 of whom creed rather than race—as, indeed, nearly everywhere else throughout Turkey—determines the divisions. About one-half of these are indigeneous; comprising some 200,000 or more Syrian Moslems, 500,000 Christians of various sects, 220,000 Ansariehs, Metualis, Ismaïliehs, and Druzes—who are neither Christians nor Mussulmans—5,000 Jews (of the old native race), and 80,000 settled Arabs and Bedoween; while the large remainder consists of Ottoman Turks, Turcomans, Kurds, non-Syrian Arabs, Jews, Armenians, and other Christians of divers races and nationalities. These various elements are as variously

distributed throughout the two sections of the country. Both in Syria and Palestine, the Moslems chiefly inhabit the towns and larger villages : Christians also abound in both, but are more numerous in the agricultural hamlets. The principal home of the Maronites, who number about 260,000, is the Lebanon, especially in the district of Kesrouan, east of Beyrout ; but they are also to be found in small communities in nearly every town from Nazareth to Aleppo. The districts inhabited by them, though for the most part steep and rugged, are perhaps the best cultivated in Syria. The orthodox and Catholic "Greeks"—Syrians by race, but so called because professing the Greek faith—number together about 230,000, and, like the Maronites, are distributed amongst the towns and country villages ; as is also the smaller sect of the Jacobites, counting all told about 50,000. The 90,000 Ansariehs, a wild and savage section of the aboriginal race, occupies the range of mountains that bears their name, extending from the banks of the Orontes to the entrance of Hamath ; 30,000 Metualis, a fanatical half Shiite sect, reside near Baalbek and in the southern part of the Lebanon, with their chief centre at Hurmûl, a village near the source of the Orontes ; while the Ismaïliehs, some 25,000 strong (a feeble remnant of the "Assassins" of the Crusades), nestle in the mountains west of Hamath, round their old stronghold of Masyâd. The Druzes, one of the strongest and most united sects in Syria, number about 90,000, for the most part inhabiting the rugged

hill district south of Beyrout and the mountains of the Haurân. There is also a considerable colony of them at Safed, in Palestine proper, and a smaller one —who are, however, Druzes by religion only and not in race—near Cairo, whence their strange creed originally came. The only certainty as to the origin and ethnological affinity of this singular race is, that the great majority of them do not belong to the Semitic family. Their own traditions connect them with China; another derives their name from a Frank Count de Dreux, and makes them descend from a band of Crusaders left behind after the great struggle; while a third and more modern theory identifies them with one or other of the tribes introduced into Northern Syria by Esarhaddon, in the seventh century B.C. Be their true pedigree which it may, certain it is that the blood of the sect is now greatly mixed, and that, amongst others, a Kurdish element is undoubtedly present. The Lebanon members of the race are found as far north as Beyrout, mingled with Maronites, as far south as Sûr (Tyre), and as far east as Damascus. Their chief town, though not their most numerous settlement, is Deïr-el-Kammar (" Convent of the Moon "), about fifteen miles south-east of Beyrout, in the district of Manaasif. Amatan and Bakhlan, in the Lebanon, and Hasbeya and Rashbeya in the Anti-Lebanon, rank as sacred cities and rallying places in time of war. The Haurânitic or Eastern Druzes adhere to their ancient customs even more pertinaciously than their Western fellows, notwith-

standing their contact with successive generations of rebels and malcontents, who have long found in this remote region a favourite place of refuge. Their chief centre here is the large village of Kunawâl, the residence of the most influential of their *ockals*, or "initiated" caste. Altogether, they form the exclusive population of more than a hundred small towns and villages, and share with Christians the occupation of nearly two hundred more. Physically they are a handsome race, of light complexion, strong, and well made, with more pronounced English sympathies than any other race in Syria.

History and tradition agree in tracing the origin of the *Arabs* to Ham and Shem, through Cush, the son of the former, and Kaktan or Toktan, the great grandson of the latter patriarch. The Shemite branch comprises the great nomadic or pastoral section of the family, the Bedoween;[1] while most of the fellahs, or settled agricultural class, claim descent from Ham. Several of the original tribes of these latter are now extinct, and although recruited from time to time by accessions from the nomads, they are greatly in the minority, and are regarded by the shepherd majority as an inferior caste. This difference of occupation it is that forms the chief distinction between the two branches of the race; but besides it there is yet another amongst

[1] Elaborate genealogical trees of both branches will be found in the Appendix to Col. Chesney's *Euphrates Expedition*, vol. i.

the nomads themselves, namely that of the "pure" Arab (*Arab-el-Arabá*) and the mixed or naturalised tribes, called *Mostarabi*, who include the posterity of Ishmael by the daughter of Mohad, king of the Hedjaz.[1] Of the former, the genealogical tables of Sale and Gagnier enumerate nearly sixty tribes; but these have now dwindled to less than half that number, scattered throughout the southern districts of the Peninsula. The best known of them are the Morrah, on the confines of Oman, the Tam and Kaktan, near Yemen, and the Beni-Tas, between Hareck and the Gulf. The far more numerous *Mostarabi* spread east, west, and north from Jebel-Toweik to near the slopes of the Taurus. The most important tribes of this class frequenting Turkish territory are the Anizeh, whose pasture-grounds extend from eastern Syria southwards to the limits of Jebel-Shomer, and in whose hands are nearly two-thirds of the Arab horse trade and traffic in sheep and wool; and the Shammar, whose territory stretches from that of the Anizeh, with whom they are mostly at war, to Northern and Middle Mesopotamia down to below Mosul, over which, as already mentioned, they levy tribute from the settled fellahs, from the *kocher* Kurds, and other minor clans who pasture in these parts. Each of these great tribes, with their

[1] In Genesis, Ishmael is married to an Egyptian woman, but Arab tradition mates him to this other spouse and derives from her his posterity. The discrepancy would be harmonised by the probable supposition of his having had two wives, polygamy being common in those days.

subdivisions, could, if united, muster nearly 30,000 spears; but their strength is much weakened by internal feuds, and it is only in defence of some common interest of the whole that anything like this force could be brought together. The secondary tribes may be reckoned by the hundred. Of those settled in or wandering through Yemen, the numerically strongest are the El-Mofid, the El-Marrah, the Beni-Aszfar, the Beni-Wahib, the El-Habab, the Elh-Saba, the Elh-Sahar, the Ghamid, the Obeïdah, and the Zahran, averaging about 40,000 families each. In the Hedjaz, Arabia Petræa, and Southern Syria, the most important are the Adwân, the Bali, the Beni-Masâd, the Harb, the Ramathin, and the Sherarat; while in Mesopotamia, the Beni-Mansûr, Beni-Hazal, the Beni-Cholan, the Fedhan, the Sabhah, Alayé-Mutchir, the Beni-Khalid, and the Soubeih rank next in strength to the Shammar. Though occupying territory which is nominally subject to the Porte, the whole of these in fact recognise only the authority of their own sheikhs; and the Pashas of Yemen, of Damascus, or of Baghdad are content if they can conciliate, without making much more than a show of controlling even the settled tribes. As for the nomads, they pay neither taxes nor military service. Among the great tribes, the government is strictly patriarchal, with gradations of authority from the *melek*, or *sheikh-el-kebîr* (great sheikh), whose power extends over all the subdivisions of a tribe, or in some cases over several

tribes, down to the head of a single family. As a rule, the chief sheikhship is hereditary, not necessarily in the order of primogeniture, but descending to the richest, bravest, and wisest member of the family in which it ordinarily runs. In the event of a failure in these qualities, the tribe is free to elect its best man for the post. The sheikh so inheriting or elected to the rank derives no revenue from his followers, but is at once their military leader and chief judge, or rather arbitrator; for so democratic is tribal life, that his decisions, especially in civil matters, are not always obeyed. The poorest member of the clan is socially the equal of the richest; and unless the authority of the sheikh be based on personal qualities that command respect his direct influence is but slight. Bedoween wealth, as may be supposed, consists in the number of the owner's flocks and herds, and especially of his camels. As nearly the whole caravan traffic of the desert is carried by these latter animals, the possession of ten raises their proprietor above poverty, while sixty or eighty represent substantial wealth. Hence their barter value for marriage dowries, blood ransoms, and other purposes for which, in settled society, money would otherwise pass. In fact, after what may be called the long episode of military power and material civilisation that began with Mohammed and ended with the Caliphates, this great race has almost everywhere lapsed into its primitive independence and simplicity of life, and as a rule the Arab

—especially the Bedoween—of to-day is socially and morally little, if at all, ahead of his ancestors before Abraham. Thus, both his vices and his virtues are those of semi-barbarism, combining the paradoxes of a generous hospitality, and a greedy avariciousness; of cruelty and kindness; of scrupulous fidelity to, and quite as often unscrupulous disregard of, a pledge once given; and of impatience of everything like law, and religious respect for *adét* (custom). In religion, both the settled and nomad tribes are for the most part Soonee Mussulmans; but, except amongst the puritan Wahabees, the yoke of both faith and morals sits lightly on the whole, and among many tribes not a few of the old pagan superstitions still survive. Finally, enough here to add that although some taxation is levied from the settled fellahs in districts well within the power of the Ottoman authorities, neither they nor the Bedoween can be said to contribute anything to the political strength of the Porte. Neither branch of the race has any love for the Turk, nor any sense of national relationship to him; and although the tribes near Baghdad furnished the doubtful boon of a bashi-bazouk contingent to the late war, neither they nor the Egyptians fought with the least spirit, and, so far as anything like a sentiment of loyalty or patriotic sympathy is concerned, both would quite as readily fight against the Padishah as for him.

The *Circassians*, in both European and Asiatic Turkey, represent the immigration which has taken

place, chiefly from Abasia and Daghestan, since the Crimean war, and especially since the final defeat of Schamyl. The severity with which most of the tribes were treated by the Russians after these events induced large numbers to seek refuge in the Sultan's territory, where the Government gave them free grants of land and other inducements to peaceful settlement. It was, however, another case of—

Cœlum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt.

The mountaineers of the Caucasus brought with them into Armenia and Asia Minor—as into Bulgaria and Thrace—the lawless and predatory habits which have so long characterised their race, and instead of industrious husbandmen and shepherds, the Porte soon found it had granted hospitality to a mere horde of brigands. In every neighbourhood in which a detachment of them was planted they soon became a terror to the district, and in only a comparatively few instances in which the local authorities acted with befitting energy, were they reduced to anything like social order. It was still expected, however, that in the event of war they would make good irregular troops; but experience has falsified even this hope, and the 350,000 or more of them now distributed throughout Asia Minor and Syria in *nuclei* strong enough to be troublesome to the authorities and dangerous to the settled inhabitants form an element which both the Government and the country would well be rid of. On the occa-

sion of the last great influx of them, in 1864, Sir Henry Bulwer, then ambassador at the Porte, advised that they should be echeloned as a military colony along the Armenian frontier, and so utilised as a border guard against their old oppressors; but this excellent suggestion was not acted on, and they were scattered instead over the interior, to work all the mischief that has since resulted from their presence wherever they have settled. Amongst their other retained habitudes, they continue to sell their daughters for the harems of Stamboul and Cairo—and so, with their fellows in Roumelia, form almost the only remaining source of supply whence purely white female slaves can now be procured.

The *Turcomans*, or Yuruks, descend, as already remarked, from the same or a closely cognate stock to that of the Ottomans, and with their Mongolian type of features, have retained also, for the most part, their old Scythian mode of life as pastoral robbers. In quietness and simplicity of character, however, they contrast favourably with the Kurds, whom otherwise they most resemble in their occupations, their system of tribal government, and less than half submission to the local authorities. In Northern Syria and South-western Asia Minor there are many settled villages of the race; but the majority are still nomadic, and, like the *kocher* Kurds, change their pasturage with the change of seasons. Their manner of removing from one place to another differs from that of other nomads, in the use of cows

and oxen as beasts of burden, a mode of transport which renders their movements much slower than those of the Arabs and Kurds. Although general abstention from intermarriage with strangers has, in the men especially, preserved much of the old Mongol harshness of feature, their women are perhaps the most comely of any of these pastoral races. As amongst both Kurds and Bedoween, they bear the whole drudgery of domestic life, and, in the case of the settled villages, do also much of the field labour; horse exercise and attention to their flocks being almost the sole occupation of the men. The language spoken by the whole is a corrupt dialect of Turkish.

The large majority of the *Jews* scattered throughout Turkish Asia are foreigners, descendants mostly of the great Spanish emigration in the fifteenth century. A few only of the old native race are to be found in Palestine and about Damascus. These last, and such of the others as by birth or choice have acquired Ottoman nationality, form, like the Greeks, Armenians, and other Rayah races, a distinct community, governed chiefly by its own rabbis and lay notables. They live almost exclusively in the larger towns, engaged in trade, money-dealing, and the minor handicrafts. Though despised and often ill-treated by both Mussulmans and Christians, they stand before the law on the same level with the other non-Moslem communities.

Of the comparatively few *Tartars* and *Gipsies*, a

word or two will suffice. The former represent part of the successive immigrations into Turkey from the Crimea which followed, first, the conquest of the latter by the Russians in 1784; secondly, the further conquest of Bessarabia in 1812; and, lastly, the Crimean War of 1854–6. The majority of the immigrants settled in the Dobrudja and other parts of Roumelia, but some crossed into Asia Minor, where they now form one of the most orderly and industrious elements of the population. The whole are chiefly Nogaïs, cognates of both Turks and Turcomans, but, unlike the latter, a quiet agricultural race, who have long lost the nomadic and warlike instincts of the parent stock. The Gipsies are here the same wild mysterious race as all the world over. In Asia Minor they are known as Xebeques and Zingani, in Northern Syria as Kurpadh, and further south and east as Nowars—distinct everywhere from all other classes of the population.

In their relation to the Government, the whole of these various races resolve themselves into two distinct groups—Mussulmans and Rayahs, the former including the majority who more or less honestly profess Islâm, and the latter the different Christian, Jewish, and semi-pagan *milleti* (communities) outside the pale of the national faith. Between these, the conquerors and the conquered, the exclusive spirit of the dominant religion has traced an impassable boundary which, for eleven hundred years, and equally under Saracens, Seljuks, and Ottoman

Turks, has rendered social fusion impossible, and kept the two classes nearly as far apart as the Carolina white man was from the free black before the war of 1862. The administrative consequences have not, it is true, been as bad as uninformed popular sympathy with our "fellow Christians" has led Western opinion to believe. For nearly all municipal purposes the Rayahs have been left free to govern themselves, they have enjoyed full religious toleration, and, barring their special *bedelié*, or military exemption tax, they have suffered little, if at all, more from fiscal and other executive abuse than their poor Mussulman neighbours, on whom, as against this one servile impost, the far heavier blood-tax of the conscription has exclusively fallen. Still, the *status* of social helotry has not merely degraded the millions who have borne it, but has fostered religious jealousies and race feuds to an extent that more than any now-a-days possible administrative oppression, has prevented national amalgamation, and must continue to prevent it till both classes be placed on absolutely the same level before the law, till the law itself and its administration be reformed, and even-handed justice — with the same rights and obligations from and towards the State—be dealt out to Moslem and Christian alike.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIONS.

More numerous, and adverse to national unity, than races—*Islâm* the most important—Western popular opinion unjust to its dogmas and ethics—Its cardinal theorem the unity of God—Minor tenets—Reverence for Jesus—Permits polygamy, but more approves monogamy—The Abbé Fleury's and Gibbon's estimates of it—Has no priesthood—The Ulema canonists, not clergy—Soonis and Shiites—Minor sects—Metualis—Ansariehs—Druzes—Yezidees—Varieties of *Christianity* still more numerous and antagonistic—The whole corrupt—The Orthodox Greek Church—Parent of most of the minor sects—Its rupture with the Latin Church—Points of difference between the two—The Greek hierarchy and Clergy—The Gregorian Armenians—Foundation of their Church—Secession from the Eastern Church—Points of difference from the Greeks and Latins—Their Clergy—The Catholic Armenians—Their schism and present organisation—Armenian Protestants—Outcome of the American missions—Least corrupt of these Christian sects—The Nestorians—Simplicity of their doctrine and ritual—Secession of the Catholic "Chaldeans"—The Syrian Jacobites—The Maronites Their qualified submission to Rome—The "Latins"—Jews: mostly foreigners—An indigenous few in Palestine, round Damascus, and in Assyria—Comparative merits of Moslems and Christians.

THE varieties of religion in these Eastern provinces are even more numerous, and in their effect more adverse to national unity than those of race. Islâm and Christianity form of course the two great trunk

faiths of the country, from the latter of which especially branch off many antagonistic sects; but outside both are several minor communions that have little or no affinity to either, and amongst nearly the whole the idea of a common nationality is subordinated to that of *millet*, or their own separate community—political quite as much as religious distinction being thereby implied. Hence it is that, in Asia as in Europe, a subject of the Porte seldom or never calls himself a Turk, or even an Ottoman, but almost always a Mussulman, an Armenian, a Greek, a Catholic, a Maronite, a Chaldæan, or a Jew, as the case may be; and the segregation thus indicated has a much more practical meaning than any mere difference of creed in Western countries.

Of the many faiths which have in this way operated to prevent these heterogeneous communities from crystallizing into a nation, Mohammedanism, the creed of the State and of nearly three-fourths of its Asiatic subjects, is politically the most important. Besides the posterity of the original conquerors, it includes the results of the apostasies among the native Christian and other races which followed each successive extension of the Ottoman power, the great majority of the Kurds, the whole of both the settled and pastoral Arabs, and the large aggregate of Turcomans, Tartars, and Circassians who complete the Moslem total of 10,000,000. Neither the scope nor purpose of this chapter permits any detailed

attempt at estimating the merits or defects of a creed which for more than twelve centuries has formed one of the chief factors in the history of the world, and from the Atlantic to the Yellow Sea is still the supreme rule of life to a hundred millions of mankind. It may, however, be affirmed that those who have observed the practical results of Islâm[1] under its best conditions cannot but feel that Western popular opinion has been less than just to both the dogmas and the ethics of this widespread faith. I have myself witnessed these results at many points in remote districts of the interior, and do not hesitate to say that, as a rule, they compare favourably with the outcome of the pseudo-Christianity—whether Greek, Armenian, or Nestorian—of the same regions. That bad Mussulmans, as bad Christians, abound all over the country is of course true; but for much of the lax faith and looser morals amongst the former in the capital and the chief seaports—beyond which foreign observation seldom extends—Western "civilisation" is mainly answerable, the effect of this in Turkey having, in fact, been to demoralise instead of elevate wherever its influence has been felt. But for the vastly preponderating *good* amongst the mass of the provincial Moslem population credit may be fairly given to the doctrinal simplicity and—on the whole—the ethical purity of their religion. The theology of

[1] The religion of Mohammed, commonly translated "submission," but more properly meaning "peace" or "salvation."

the Koran—in the plenary inspiration of which the pious Mussulman of to-day believes as firmly as the Puritan of two hundred and fifty years ago clung to similar faith in the Bible—may be called a pure theism, differing little fundamentally from our modern Unitarianism. Its cardinal theorem is "*There is but one God*," far subsidiarily to which follows the prophetship of Mohammed, of Moses, and of Christ, the divine mission (though not the personal divinity) of the last of whom [1] is a special tenet of the Mussulman's creed. The minor articles, grafted on this central dogma, are rather relatively than absolutely good. They are: prayer (with ablution) five times a day, almsgiving, circumcision, the pilgrimage to Mecca, abstinence from wine, from swine's flesh and things strangled, and from gaming and usury. Beyond these main points of religious observance, several of which were admittedly adopted from Judaism, the moral code of Islâm further enjoins truth, honesty, sexual morality, and mercifulness to the brute creation. It affirms, too, a future state, with a system of rewards and punishments, which, if differing from those of the Christian heaven and hell, are to Eastern imaginations quite as attractive

[1] The Koran, indeed, gives "Jesus the son of Mary" the very highest rank as a prophet, acknowledging Him to be the Word proceeding from God, and the Messiah of the Jews; it recognises also His immaculate conception, His office in heaven as Mediator and Intercessor, and His final supremacy as the appointed Judge of all, but claims for Mohammed a later, and the last prophetic mission.

and deterrent. The legitimisation of polygamy, it need hardly be said, was merely the acceptance of a usage already consecrated by immemorial usage throughout the East, and still followed there by the Jews. The Koranic law on this point, too, though permitting a Mussulman to have four wives, indirectly recommends him—as is, in fact, the modern fashion—to marry only one; whereas the Talmudists sanctioned, and the Jews practised, an unlimited polygamy. To these cardinal articles of faith and practice the Koran adds many others which to the European mind are puerile and absurd, while tradition and the commentators are answerable for yet more of a similar kind. Still, much as these grotesque accessories of Koranic theology disfigure the grand simplicity of its central tenets and rules of life, these last it is which keep alive the religion and give it vital force among so many millions of mankind. The Abbé Fleury, writing more than a century and a half ago, says:

> The Mohammedans are neither atheists nor idolaters. On the contrary, their religion, false as it is, has many principles in common with the true one. They believe in One God Almighty, Creator of all, just and merciful; they abhor polytheism and idolatry; they hold the immortality of the soul, a final judgment, a heaven and a hell, angels good and bad, and even guardian angels; they hold Moses and Christ to have been great prophets sent from God, and the Law and the Gospel to be sacred books.

In contrast with the corrupt forms of Christianity, which to a great extent Islamism displaced, it admits

of being viewed to still greater advantage. Thus it may be fairly said to have embodied more truth and less error than the Papacy in its grosser form. The faith of Saladin was, indeed, essentially more Christian than that of Cœur de Lion, and Mecca was the scene of a purer worship than mediæval Rome.

If (says Gibbon) the Christian Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul could return to the Vatican, they might possibly inquire the name of the Deity who is worshipped with such mysterious rites in that magnificent temple. . . . . But the Turkish dome of St. Sophia, with an increase of splendour and size, represents the humble tabernacle erected at Medina by the hands of Mohammed. The Mohammedans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the objects of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. 'I believe in one God, and Mohammed the Apostle of God,' is the simple and invariable profession of Islâm. The intellectual idea of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honours of the Prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.

Let the Arabian Prophet (says another eloquent writer) be called heresiarch and impostor; yes, but a reformer too. He kindled, from side to side of the Christian world, an extraordinary abhorrence of idol-worship, and actually cleansed the plains of Asia from the long-settled impurities of polytheism. Did he overthrow Christianity in Syria, in Africa, in Spain? No: superstition only, for Christianity had died away from these countries long before. A respect for man, for nature, for God—a respect not characteristic of the frenzied zealot—was shown in the injunction so strictly laid upon the Moslem armies not to destroy the fruits of the earth, not to disturb the labour of the husbandman, not to cut down the palm or the olive, not to poison or to stop wells, to spare the old and the young, the mother and her babes, and, in a word, to abridge war, as far as might be done, of its horrors. In reading these military orders,

and in following the march of the Caliphs who received them, it is impossible to exclude from the mind the recollection of wars waged by Christian—'most Christian'—kings, not against distant and equal foes, but upon their own unoffending and helpless subjects—wars which left nothing behind them but smoking ruins and a blood-sodden wilderness. Call Mohammed fanatic or impostor; but language wants a term—or, if it might afford one, the rule of Christian propriety forbids it to be used—which should fitly designate the Philips, the Ferdinands, the Louises of our modern European history.[1]

The religion to which impartial critics concede these claims to respect differs from nearly all others in having, strictly speaking, no priesthood. It recognises no earthly mediator between God and man, and the Koran being quite as much a code of secular law as of religion, its interpreters and administrators are canonists, but in no European or even Eastern sense priests. They form, it is true, a numerous and very powerful hierarchy, but without properly any sacerdotal functions or attributes whatever. To this rule the Caliph himself is, perhaps, the only exception. As the "successor" and Vicar of the Prophet on earth, he now unites in the person of the Sultan the sacredness of a pontiff with the authority of a

[1] The change which has come over the minds of theologians and scholars with regard to Islâm since Luther endorsed Brother Richard's description of the Prophet as "a devil, a first-born child of Satan, the damned Mohammed," and Melanchthon declared his creed to be "altogether made of blasphemy, robbery, and shameful lusts," is still better reflected in the Rev. R. Bosworth Smith's *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, in which the reader who cares for a fuller estimate of Koranic dogma and morals will find the most catholic estimate of both with which I am acquainted.

temporal sovereign. The former quality, however, is recognised only by the Soonees,[1] one of the two great sects into which Mohammedanism is divided, the schismatic Shiites—who include the Persians, a portion of the Kurds, the Syrian Metualis, and a few Indian Mussulmans—holding that the succession expired with Hassan the son of Ali, since whom Ommiades, Abbassides, Fatimites, and Ottomans have all alike been usurpers of the title. Next in sacredness to the Caliph ranks the Scheriff of Mecca; but the veneration in which he is held by both Soonees and Shiites results from his descent from what may be called the Levitical tribe of the Koreish, and his hereditary governorship of the holy city, rather than from any priestly character. At a long remove in veneration below these two half-sacred chiefs of the faith come the Ulema, a body of doctors

[1] So called from their recognising the authority of the *Soona*, a collection of the traditional sayings of the Prophet, which forms a kind of supplement to the Koran, directing the observance of many things there omitted. These oral traditions are rejected by the Shiites, who acknowledge only Ali and his descendants as the true successors of Mohammed. Besides this great central schism, the Soonees are divided into the four orthodox sub-sects of the Hanafeeites, the Shafeeites, the Malekites, and Hambalites—called respectively after the four great doctors of Soonee theology—but these do not differ more widely than the several orders of the Papacy, and create no disturbance of the political unity that reigns within the Ottoman pale. The first predominates in Turkey and the remoter East, the second in Egypt and Syria, and the third in north-western Africa and Morocco, while the fourth—which differs most from the others—includes the Wahabees of Central Arabia and a few fanatical sectaries of Nablous and Baghdad.

who expound the Koran and furnish both ministers to the mosques and dispensers of the law. The authority attaching to this great corps in the person of its chief, the Sheikh-ul-Islâm, is the only check on the absolute despotism of the sovereign—for the control imposed by the recent "constitution" can hardly as yet be seriously considered. This body plays so large a part in the administration of the country, in both Europe and Asia, that some notice of its constitution and functions will be given in a subsequent separate chapter.

Of the minor more or less cognate sects, that of the Syrian Metualis approaches nearest to Islâm. Its members call themselves Shiite Mussulmans, sharing the Persian faith in Ali; but to the tenets of the Koran they add others which partake of the old native paganism. Ceremonially they are as fanatical as the Hindoos, refusing to eat or drink with persons of another faith, and regarding Christians of all sects as especially unclean. While rejecting, too, the spiritual supremacy of the Caliph, they also practically recognize no civil authority but that of their own Emir, of the notorious family of Harfûsh, in the district of Baalbek.

The Ansariehs stand in a still more doubtful relation to the national faith. To the Turks they call themselves Mussulmans; but this is a transparent *convenance*, as their religious observances have nothing in common with those of the Koran, while several doctrines which they openly avow find no

sanction whatever in the latter. Thus they place Adam, Christ, and Mohammed on the same prophetic level, but regard Abel, Peter, and especially Ali as incarnations of the Deity. They believe, too, in the transmigration of souls, and mix up sun-worship and other idolatries with certain ceremonies borrowed from the Eastern Church. But their exact tenets and practices are involved in mystery, as they rigorously refuse to give strangers any precise information respecting either. Maundrell, after describing them as "such Proteuses in religion that nobody was ever able to discover what shape or standard their consciences are really of," adds, "All that is certain about them is that they make very much and good wine, and are great drinkers." The Ismaïliehs, whom some identify with the old Persian tribe of the "Assassins," may be regarded as, religiously at least, a branch of this sect. They outwardly profess to be Shiite Mussulmans, and occasionally frequent the mosques, but their real worship—believed to be essentially pagan—is conducted in great secresy, and the contents of their sacred books are known only to an initiated minority of the sect itself.[1]

Similarly mystery shrouds the faith and religious practices of the much more important sect of the Druzes, who, though less fanatical than the semi-

[1] Von Hammer's *History of the Assassins* gives perhaps the best account of the dogmas and practices of this mysterious clan.

pagan clans just mentioned, are equally uncommunicative as to their special tenets and modes of worship. Copies of their sacred books have, however, found their way to Europe; and, though their style is mystical and obscure, some proximate notion of their leading doctrines has been thus obtained. The origin of the sect dates from the beginning of the eleventh century, when the Caliph Hakim, third of the Fatimite dynasty, founded the heresy of his own Divine mission, and vindicated his pretensions by extravagances and cruelties which clearly proved him to be mad. A Persian named Mohammed-ben-Ismail, surnamed El-Durzi, who had settled shortly before in Cairo, adopted and proclaimed the heresy with such vehemence that he was chased out of Egypt into Syria, where he preached the new dogma, mixing up with it his native doctrine of the metempsychosis. Hamza, another Persian disciple of Hakim, built upon the foundation thus laid, with the result of establishing a creed of which the following would seem to be the principal features: Belief in the unity of God, and successive incarnations of Him, the last of which was that of Hakim; the transmigration of souls; the existence of five superior spiritual ministers, of whom Christ and Hamza are the chief; and expectation of the triumphant reappearance of Hakim to rule over all others for ever. With these cardinal tenets they combine the non-practice of prayer, of fasting, and of circumcision; the old Ptolemaic custom of marriage

with a sister; and the free drinking of wine and eating of pork. While such are the general doctrines and practices of the whole, the sect is divided into two widely distinct classes—the *djahêl* ("ignorant"), who observe few or no religious rites and form the large majority; and the *okkâl* ("initiated"), who may be called the priesthood, or sacred caste, of the community. The country inhabited by the sect is divided into districts, in each of which a council of *okkâls* meets weekly to consider and interchange reports on all matters especially affecting Druze interests. The worship of the sect, which is confined to the initiated, is conducted with great privacy in small churches (*khulweh*), built mostly on remote hill-tops, access to which is jealously forbidden to all but members of the privileged caste. Altogether, though less numerous than the Maronites, this warlike clan is perhaps the most curiously interesting and politically important of the many sects into which the religions of Syria are divided.

Besides other essential distinctions, the Yezîdees, or mis-called "devil-worshippers," of Chaldæa differ from the whole of those who precede in having no sacred books. Their traditional rights and tenets are nevertheless both complex and rigidly adhered to. Ethnically the tribe is believed to be of the same stock as the Kurds, but the origin both of their name and their creed is said to be unknown even to themselves. Dr. Badger thinks, "it cannot be doubted that the term 'Yezîdee' is derived from Yezd, one of

the titles applied by the ancient Persians to the Supreme Being;" but other authorities say that the name means "accused," and was originally given to the sect by their Mohammedan neighbours as a term of reproach. The investigations of Ainsworth, Layard, and Badger have disproved the previously prevalent notion that they are in any proper sense worshippers of the Devil. They do, it is true, reverence the evil principle under the title of Melek Taoos, visibly symbolised as a brazen cock, but out of fear rather than love, and scrupulously avoid all mention of Satan and the use of any word implying execration. Their religion, in fact, seems to be a compound of corrupted Zoroastrianism and still more spurious Christianity, complicated beyond all possibility of theological disentanglements by borrowing from idolatry and Islamism. Thus they adore the sun as symbolical of Christ; they reverence also both Moses and Mohammed; practise baptism and (though not universally) circumcision; abstain from swine's flesh, but not from the blood of other animals; believe in the transmigration of souls; and, besides divorcing for a trifle, may marry three wives at a time. In harmony with such a creed and rites their priesthood is divided into no fewer than five orders, which are prohibited from intermarrying, and are thus kept distinct. First in rank is the supreme Sheikh-Nazir, or guardian of the chief shrine of the sect at Sheikh-Adi, in the mountains north-east of Mosul. This office is hereditary, and its holder for

the time being is supposed to be endowed with supernatural powers. Next come the *pîrs*, or elders, who are also regarded with great veneration, and often act as deputies of the Nazir. After them rank the sheikhs, who may be called the scribes of the sect, though but few of them can write. These are followed by the *kawwâls*, or sacred musicians, whose function is to chant hymns at the principal festivals to the sound of flutes and tambourines; and below them again come the *fakîrs*, who perform all the menial offices at Sheikh-Adi and accompany the sacred cock on its periodical begging rounds amongst the villages. Besides this sacerdotal hierarchy the sect has also a temporal Emir, whose dignity is likewise hereditary, and who forms the medium of official communication between the tribe and the Ottoman authorities. His residence is at Mosul, the head-quarters of the sect. The general character of this singular people is better than their creed; they are brave, hospitable, fairly temperate—though Rich describes them as "even greater drinkers than Christians"—industrious, and, what is rare enough in those regions to merit special mention, remarkably cleanly in their habits. But they are ignorant to a proverb, and their prejudice against instruction being proof against all missionary effort hitherto tried, the prospect of their attaining a higher civilisation seems exceptionally slight.

The varieties of Christianity existing side by side with this group of Moslem and semi-idolatrous

creeds are even more numerous and discordant than the "paynim" sects thus briefly noticed. Branching originally from the parent stock of the Eastern Church, their ramifications are as perplexing as a genealogical tree, with the further element of confusion that, while each member of the family devoutly hates all the rest "for the love of God," the whole may be pronounced to be now so corrupt as to have little left in common with either the Catholicism or, still less, the Protestantism of Western Europe. The fundamental dogma of Christ's Divinity of course forms a link with both, though even as to this the feud as to "natures" and "persons" has survived for more than fourteen centuries; but beyond that it would be hard to say what other rule of faith or morals has not been perverted and debased out of all likeness to its evangelical original as understood by the Western Churches.

In antiquity, as in political importance and the number of its professors throughout the Empire, the Orthodox Greek or Byzantine Church ranks first among the many Christian communions of which this averment may be made. Under its earlier name of the Eastern—as distinguished from the Western or Latin—Church it was, as has been said, the parent stock whence diverged Armenians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, with the eight or ten sub-sects of later growth that complete the muster-roll of Oriental Christianity. The one great event in its own history was its rupture with the Latin Church, beginning with

the ninth century and consummated in the tenth, on the subject of the "procession" of the Holy Ghost, the Greeks rejecting, while the Latins upheld, the addition of *filioque* to the Nicene Creed. Many subsequent Councils, especially that of Florence (1442), attempted in vain to reconcile the dissidents; and from this "mystery" of the schoolmen sprang the schism and cross anathemas which have ever since divided the Christian world into two camps as fiercely hostile and irreconcilable as the Soonees and Shiites of Islâm. True it is that in most, if not all, of the essential doctrines of their common faith the two Churches are still nominally agreed; but on many important minor points, besides the immediate cause of their rupture, they are widely at variance. Thus the Greeks, though praying for the dead, reject purgatory; in the celebration of the Eucharist they allow the laity to commune in both kinds, and use leavened instead of unleavened bread; they exclude confirmation and extreme unction from the list of sacraments, but regard both as "mysteries;" they observe a different calendar; they rigorously exclude images from their churches while freely admitting pictures; they make the sign of the Cross from the right shoulder to the left, instead of conversely as amongst the Latins; they permit the marriage of their secular clergy up to the rank of priest before ordination, and sanction the free reading of the Bible by the laity; and, finally, they deny the supremacy and infallibility of the Bishop of Rome. On the

other hand, transubstantiation[1] and the worship of saints and of the Virgin Mary are essential institutions of both Churches, while as regards fasts and other ritualistic austerities the Greeks go far beyond their Western rivals.[2] "Generally speaking," says the very Protestant author of the *View of All Religions*, "the Greek Church is as deeply sunk in idolatrous error as the Romish, and exhibits, perhaps, even more of the imbecility of superstition, combined with more barbarous ignorance. . . . But in proportion as the political influence of the Romish Church has declined and the Easterns have come into contact with enlightened Protestants, they have shown a disposition favourable to a closer approximation to the purer doctrines of the Reformed faith." Yes, but, as the later Anglican advocates of "union" well know, on the one-sided condition of these last adapting most of their distinctive novelties of faith and ritual to the Byzantine standard, and subordinating Canterbury to the spiritual supremacy of the Fanar.[3] Doctrinally, it may be true that the Greek

[1] This doctrine is, however, of comparatively modern introduction into the orthodox liturgy, and the term is believed to have been first sanctioned by Gabriel Severus, metropolitan of Philadelphia, in the sixteenth century, who had resided a long time at Venice.

[2] What with four Lents, three fasts, and three vigils, besides Wednesday and Friday of every week, and sometimes Monday also, the Greeks should either fast or abstain from meat, fish, and even dairy produce, during a total of 238 days in the year.

[3] The special quarter of Constantinople in which the Greek Patriarch resides.

Church has more points of agreement with Protestantism than the Church of Rome; but the resemblance stops there, as neither the character of its clergy nor the outcome of its teaching has much in common with those of the Reformed communions of Western Europe.

Such as it is, however, this is the faith of above 1,000,000 of the Asiatic subjects of the Porte. Of these about one-half are of Hellenic origin, settled in the islands and along the seaboard of Asia Minor, and the remainder chiefly Syrians ("Greeks" only by religion), scattered throughout Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Arabistan. The whole are subject to a hierarchy consisting of the Patriarch of Constantinople, the three now secondary patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, forty metropolitans and suffragan bishops,[1] and a very numerous, if not "noble," army of monks and secular clergy. The ignorance of these two latter classes, as also of the inferior clergy of nearly all other communions, coupled with the many gross abuses encouraged by—because profitable to—the bishops, sufficiently accounts for the low standard of Eastern Christianity, as regards both faith and morals, and discourages hope of much improvement amongst any of the whole. The education of a *papas*, or common priest, seldom goes beyond reading and writing, acquired in

[1] These are, of course, exclusive of the still more numerous episcopate of the European provinces, over which the authority of the Œcumenical Patriarch also extends.

the village school, supplemented by learning by heart the forms for the baptismal, marriage, and burial services, of which—as they are written in the ancient Greek, he understands not a word. His personal habits, too, neither are nor are expected to be above the normal level of the peasantry whence he has sprung.

They have no conception of Christianity but in its external rites (says Ubicini, quoting an educated Greek informant), and can only teach others what they believe and practise themselves. Their whole religion consists of the constant repetition of the sign of the Cross, in attending mass, in kissing the pictures which adorn the *templon* (or screen before the altar), and in the strict observance of Lent and other fasts. Thus it happens that a priest may consent to give absolution to a thief or a murderer, especially if the victim chanced to have been an infidel or schismatic, but never to one who has transgressed the *Tessaracosti* (four Lents).

The influence of such a clergy on the intellectual and moral development of their people is what might be supposed.

The Œcumenical Patriarch is elected, and may also be deposed, by a synod consisting of twelve metropolitans and three lay delegates of the nation, whose choice requires confirmation by the Porte. Under a charter granted by Mohammed II., on the capture of Constantinople, and since confirmed by other firmans, his Holiness and his prelates enjoy, besides complete ecclesiastical independence, many other important rights and privileges, including jurisdiction in nearly all civil and correctional disputes between members of their own Church. Enough here to say that from the abuse of this secular

authority by their own superior clergy, the Rayah Greeks, on both sides of the Bosphorus, suffer much more than from the misrule of the Turks. Of the secondary patriarchates, whose incumbents are also elected by their own synods, that of Alexandria, formerly the first in dignity, now ranks after the pontificate of the Fanar. It claims jurisdiction over the four dioceses of Libya, Memphis, Pelusium, and Metelis, but has now few spiritual subjects outside the villages and capital of Lower Egypt. The patriarch of Antioch, who resides at Damascus, ranks next, with authority over twenty prelates dispersed throughout Cilicia, Syria, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. This dignitary has two rivals, who assume the same title, the one as head of the Syrian-Jacobites and the other as chief of the Maronites—both in communion with Rome. The Pope also creates a titular patriarch of Antioch *in partibus*, so that this cradle of the Christian name gives style to four spiritual chiefs, none of whom reside within its ruined walls. The patriarchate of Jerusalem, now the poorest of all, is limited to Palestine, the country beyond Jordan, Idumea, and part of Arabia. The holder of the dignity generally resides with a portion of his clergy at Constantinople, where two churches and a palace are maintained for him at the cost of the Monastery of the Holy Sepulchre. He is a member of the Fanar synod, and by virtue of his seat shares in the respect with which the faithful and even the Turks themselves regard "Jerusalem the august."

Although the Armenians did not secede from the parent Eastern Church till more than a century and a half after the Nestorians, their numbers, wealth, and political influence rank them next after the members of the great Orthodox communion. According to their own national tradition, too, they rival these latter in the antiquity of their conversion to the Gospel faith. The first seeds of Christian doctrine were, they say, sown amongst their ancestors by Thaddeus, one of the seventy-two disciples, and St. Bartholomew the Apostle, in or about A.D. 34. But if so, the fruits must have been few, as (still according to tradition, for the Greek ecclesiastical historians are silent on the subject) nearly three centuries later St. Gregory the Enlightener found the nation still practically pagan, and in A.D. 312 laid the foundation of the national Church by converting King Tiridates and his subjects *en masse* to the faith of the Council of Nice. This holy descendant of the Arsacides founded and occupied the first Armenian patriarchate for nearly twenty years, when, as was the pious fashion of the time, he retired to the desert and died in the odour of monkish sanctity in A.D. 342. Some seventy years later, the new faith received still more permanent form and character from the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the translation of the Bible from the Septuagint into the vernacular. The intellectual movement thus stimulated continued to progress till nearly the middle of the sixth century, when, after "floating,"

as Gibbon says, "eighty-four years in a state of indifference or suspense," a synod of Armenian bishops, under the impression that the General Council of Chalcedon (held in 451), instead of condemning the heresy of Eutyches,[1] had admitted the duality of persons in Christ, and so renewed the errors of Nestorius, in A.D. 535 rejected the Chalcedonian decree and seceded from the Byzantine communion. The schism was not, however, formally consummated till 552, from which year the Armenians date their calendar and the separate existence of their Church. Their chief points of difference from the Greeks and Latins may be briefly stated: (1) Though rejecting the Council of Chalcedon, they deny the two natures of Christ, holding that what were originally two after their union became one; (2) they hold, with the Greeks, that the Holy Ghost "proceeds" from the Father only; (3) they reject purgatory[2] and indulgences, though believing in transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass; (5) they deny the supremacy of the Pope; and (6) they retain certain pagan (or Jewish) rites, such as the sacrifice of animals, called *madagh*. Among

[1] Whose orthodoxy and sanctity had been affirmed by the second Council of Ephesus only three years before.

[2] They believe, however, that the souls of the dead pass into a place called *Gayank* (a mansion), which is not purgatory, for they suffer neither pain nor pleasure, but retain a perfect consciousness of the past. From this state they may be delivered by the alms and prayers of the living, which the latter therefore give liberally for their departed friends.

their most prominent superstitions are their fasts, or vigils, and the adoration of the Cross. The former are fewer but stricter than those of the Greeks, while their worship of the Cross falls little short of sheer idolatry. They agree with the Latins in the mode of making the sign of the Cross, but with the Greeks in the adoration of pictures instead of sculptured images in their churches. The Armenian clergy consist of four patriarchs and an indefinite number of bishops, *vartabeds* (preachers), monks—from whom the preceding dignitaries are chosen—secular priests, and deacons. The spiritual chief of the whole is the Patriarch, or *Catholicos*, of Echmiadzin, a convent near Mount Ararat, in Russian Armenia, after whom rank the Primates of Sis, in Cilicia, of Agathmar (the island in Lake Van, mentioned in a previous chapter), and of Constantinople. The last, though lowest in ecclesiastical rank, is the secular head of the nation in Turkey, and, like the Greek Patriarch, in concert with a mixed council exercises extensive civil power over his co-religionists throughout the Empire. The peculiar duty and prerogative of the Catholicos—which also indicate the extent of his power and the chief sources of his income—are to ordain bishops and consecrate the *meiron*[1] or holy oil, the

[1] The rites attending this ceremony, one of the most important of the Armenian Church, still curiously savour of the old Magian worship. "In the spring," says Ubicini, "the clergy of the three churches of Echmiadzin make a solemn

use of which at confirmations, ordinations, and various other ceremonies is one of the principal superstitions of the Armenians. The sacred chrism is distributed throughout the nation by *novirdgs*, or travelling nuncios, who sell it to the faithful everywhere, from the Hague to Calcutta, at prices commensurate with its miraculous virtues in this world and the next. Similarly as to episcopal ordinations, the Catholicos has a monopoly of this highly-fee'd function for all bishops of the Church except within the narrow limits of the dioceses of Sis and Agathmar; and as any monk who is recommended by his convent, and can pay the fees, is eligible to the dignity, whether he have a diocese in view or not, the result is that most of the monasteries are stocked with unattached prelates, waiting on Providence for sees. In Turkey the election to a vacant bishopric

gathering of flowers, as was formerly done at Venice for the *Theriacum*; these are thrown, with oil, into a silver caldron, which is placed upon a carpet of rich stuffs in the middle of the church. Mass is celebrated during forty days, and on the last day the Catholicos himself officiates in pontifical pomp and surrounded by all his clergy. The arm of St. Gregory the Enlightener being then plunged into the caldron, the contents immediately begin to boil; the consecration is effected, and the holy chrism is preserved in jars to be distributed among the churches of the Armenian faith." The Patriarchs of Sis and Agathmar also compound their holy unguents for use within their own dioceses; but, as the Catholicos alone possesses the limb of the saint, they are obliged to mix his chrism with their own in order to perfect the consecration. The miraculous boiling is of course a mere chemical trick, like that of the Greek "holy fire" at Jerusalem during Easter.

is nominally by choice of the inferior clergy, who submit a list of candidates to the Patriarch of Constantinople and his council; but *bucksheesh* notoriously both shapes the original list and decides the final choice. Next after the bishops come the *vartabeds*, or preachers, who frequently discharge episcopal duties, and below them the married priests and deacons. What has been remarked as to the general ignorance and immorality of the Greek clergy applies equally to their Gregorian fellows of nearly every class, and in both cases the effect on their people is of course similar. Besides the fees paid by and to the upper grades, the Armenian clergy are supported by *vacoufs*, or pious foundations, consisting of property bequeathed to the Church, by the sale of wax candles, and by the voluntary contributions of the people made on all Sundays and other festivals throughout the year. It is due to their episcopate to add that the extra-legitimate revenue levied by them, from the Patriarch downwards, though large, is still less than that extorted by the Greek hierarchy, whose fiscal oppression of their community is one of the most crying scandals of Eastern Christianity.

The most liberal and Europeanised section of the nation, however, is that called the United, or Catholic, Armenians—the outcome of a schism dating from the latter part of the seventeenth century, when a Jesuit mission at Erzeroum converted the Armenian bishop and several of his clergy and flock

to the faith of Rome. The intercourse of the Armenians with the Papal Church had begun at the period of the Crusades, and been maintained more or less intimately during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but it was not till 1688 that the nucleus of a definite secession was formed by this harvest of Jesuit zeal in Erzeroum. Papal congregations were subsequently organised at Kars, Akhaltisk, Erivan, and other towns, and, notwithstanding a vigorous persecution by the Armenian hierarchy, the movement spread into Asia Minor and even to the capital, where after a time the ægis of French diplomatic protection was extended to the new sect. The enthusiasm of a young Armenian priest named Mechitar, who had been converted at Aleppo, after at first helping, subsequently embarrassed the action of the Propagandists by seeking to give to the schism rather the character of a national reform than what would now be called an Ultramontane conquest. More attached to Mount Ararat than to the Vatican, he aimed at converting his countrymen not for the sake of Rome, but in the hope of producing national unity and, as a consequence, national emancipation. This, it need hardly be said, was not the aim of the Papal agents, who accordingly opposed the young reformer nearly as rancorously as the Armenian clergy, till, driven from Constantinople, he took refuge in the Morea (then held by the Venetians), and founded at Modon a Benedictine monastery, which was subsequently approved by

Pope Clement XI. From this, a few years later, when the Morea fell into the power of the Turks, he removed to Venice, where the Republic granted him the little island of St. Lazarus, near the Lido, on which he founded the convent and order of Armenian monks, named after himself, whose talents and learning have since become famous throughout the world.[1] The breach thus established between the disciples of Mechitar and those of the Propaganda still remains open, and has since more than once menaced the dissolution of the Armeno-Catholic community in Turkey. At length, after varied fortunes of persecution and toleration, the sect was, in 1831, finally recognised as a distinct community, enjoying the same civil rights and privileges as the Gregorians, under a patriarch chosen by the people and confirmed by the Porte. The civil authority of this functionary is exercised in concert with a council of twelve lay members, and is entirely distinct from the jurisdiction of an ecclesiastical hierarchy consisting of (1) the Patriarch of Cilicia, (2) the Primate of Constantinople, (3) the bishops, and (4) a body of monastic and secular clergy. The primatial see of the capital is independent of the Patriarch of Cilicia and the Porte, and its incumbent consequently exercises none of the civil authority wielded, in common with the Gregorian bishops, by

[1] The order has also an establishment in Vienna and a college in Constantinople.

the other prelates of the sect.[1] The patriarchate of Cilicia (the titular of which resides in the convent of Bezoummar, in the Lebanon) includes that province, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, and Lesser Armenia, besides two archbishoprics *in partibus* and the suffragan sees of Aleppo, Mardin, and Amasia-Tocat. The monastic clergy include the Mechitarists and the Antonine monks of the Lebanon; while the seculars comprise the priests of the Propaganda and the ordinary native priests, educated at Angora, Trebizond, and Constantinople. The social and political importance of this section of the nation much exceeds its numerical strength, which, in all, is less than 50,000. Of these about 20,000 reside in Constantinople, 10,000 at Angora, 5,000 at and around Erzeroum, 3,000 at Trebizond, 2,000 at Tocat, 1,000 at Mardin, nearly as many at Aleppo, 2,000 at Artwin, and about the same number at Brousa. Of the whole it may be said that they form the most educationally advanced section of the nation: they mix more with Europeans than do the Gregorians, and in manners, if not in character, have lost much of the grossness that still distinguishes the latter. The women dress *à la franque*, and socially both sexes affect the habits of Western life.

[1] The pretensions of Mgr. Hassoun, the present occupant of this see, have for some years past occasioned much discord in the community, and form the subject of a still unsettled dispute between the Vatican and the Porte.

The Armenian Protestants, a much later offshoot from the mother Church, formed a marked exception to the general corruption and debasement of these Eastern Christian sects—the germ of a reform that may yet purify and regenerate the whole. Less than thirty years old as a legally recognised communion, this little body has grown at a rate which in Christian history has had no precedent since apostolic times. Fifty years ago there was not an Evangelical native Christian in Turkey: they now number about 30,000, with a regularly organised and self-supporting Church system, served by native pastors, who in character and instruction may be fairly said to excel any other native clergy in the East. The movement of which this is so far the result began in 1832, when the agents of the American Board of Foreign Missions, who had for nearly ten years before vainly striven to gain a footing amongst the Greeks and Jews of the Levant littoral, turned their attention to the Armenians. Though fully imbued with the orthodox faith in the power of mere printed Scripture to work miracles in the way of conversion, they wisely supplemented the distribution of Bibles, Testaments, and tracts, in the vernacular by opening schools in Constantinople, Brousa, Smyrna, Beyrout, and elsewhere; and, without offensive efforts at proselytism, attracted hearers to simple expositions of what may be called catholic Christian doctrine. The result showed the wisdom of these tactics. The jealousy of the Armenian

clergy was not at first excited; and while the free circulation of the translated Scriptures was for a time unopposed, the schools also rapidly filled with similar clerical sanction. The movement, however, soon attained proportions which alarmed not merely the Armenian but also the Greek Patriarch, and both accordingly joined their influence to crush the dangerous revolution. Several of the native teachers, and other agents employed by the missionaries, were arrested and exiled by these dignitaries, and a violent persecution, by the free use of anathema and excommunication, was directed against all who accepted the Evangelical heresy. The usual result followed. The very condemnation of the new doctrines provoked inquiry respecting them, and the wave of missionary success spread in Asia to Aintab, Aleppo, Kharpout, Sivas, Trebizond, Erzeroum, Diarbekir, Kaiserieh, and other parts, with, it might be, only a few converts at each station, but every one of which became a source whence the reforming leaven worked out into wider fields. By 1849 the movement had obtained such a measure of success as warranted the missionaries in organising a network of "churches" under native pastors specially educated for the work, and supported by their congregations. Nor, as the joint opposition of the Greek Patriarch indicated, was it only amongst the Armenians that the reformed tenets made way. The Orthodox pale also contributed its quota—considerable, though smaller than that of the Gregorians—to the roll of converts,[1] who

either formed separate congregations, or, where too few to do this, joined harmoniously with their Armenian fellow-proselytes. A year later, in 1850, the influence of Sir Stratford Canning induced the Government to recognise the new sect as a distinct community, with complete independence of the two patriarchates, and a special *vakeel*, or civil agent, to represent it at the Porte. As will be inferred from what precedes, the form of Church government in the new body is Congregationalism, but several "Evangelical Unions" practically group the whole into as many presbyteries, and the missionaries, though claiming no authority, have still an influential voice in their affairs. The latest available statistics of the community east of the Bosphorus report seventy-four separate churches with more than 200 out stations, ministering, as has been said, to nearly 30,000 registered Protestants, and supporting relatively more and better schools than any other so-called Christian communion in the country. Although as yet the smallest of the non-Mussulman sects of the Empire, such a body—the growth of less than forty years—promises to be one of the most potent factors in both its religious and social regeneration. The comparative simplicity of its creed and worship, and the generally high standard of morality among its members, have done much already to give Mohammedan observers juster views of what Christianity really is, and to abate the contempt inspired by the corrupt and spurious types

of it with which only they have hitherto been familiar. The movement of which these are only some of the results is largely indebted to the fostering care of the British Embassy, but for the energetic protection of which it would probably have been strangled in its birth: but its success is primarily, and in a much greater degree, due to the American missionaries, whose "marvellous combination of piety and common sense,"[1] coupled with a zeal that in many instances has been nothing less than apostolic, has done more for the regeneration not alone of the Armenians, but of the Empire generally, than the efforts of all other missionary agents combined.

The Nestorians, a remnant of the ancient Syrian Church, rank next—though at a long remove—to this infant body of reformed Armenians in the simplicity and purity of their creed and ritual. They derive their name from Nestorius, a native of Antioch and Patriarch of Constantinople, who was excommunicated by the third General Council of Ephesus in 431, for, amongst other alleged heresies, refusing to the Virgin Mary the title of *Mother of God*, and for holding not only to two natures but to two persons in Christ. He himself denied both charges, but his rival and enemy, Cyril of Alexandria, by refusing to wait till the friends of the accused prelate reached Ephesus, converted the

[1] The Earl of Shaftesbury in the House of Lords, March 10, 1854.

Council into a packed tribunal, and Nestorius was condemned unheard. He was banished first to Arabia-Petræa, then to Libya, and finally died in the Thebaid. His cause, however, having been ardently espoused by the famous school of Edessa, and by several of the Syrian bishops, took shape in a new sect, which before the end of the century had so multiplied as to appoint the Patriarch of Seleucia and to become the dominant Christian community in Persia. Between the fifth and eleventh centuries zealous missionaries spread the tenets of the sect through Syria, Arabia, Egypt, India, China, and Tartary, in the last of which the reigning prince, whose fame as Prester John has so long amused the credulity of Europe, is said to have accepted not merely baptism but ordination at their hands. Meanwhile, the wave of Moslem conquest rolled east and north, submerging all rival creeds in its course, till finally, about A.D. 1400, Tamerlane trampled out nearly all remains of Nestorian Christianity in Persia, and this once great community gradually dwindled to the poor proportions in which it now survives in eastern Kurdistan and on the plains of the Tigris beyond Mosul, with a variously estimated total of from 150,000 to 200,000 members.[1] They are a simple, patient, and laborious race, who have suffered

[1] Gibbon says 300,000, but later estimates reduce this computation by nearly one-half. In addition, however, to these Turco-Persian Nestorians, a strong colony of the sect, reckoned at 100,000, has long been settled on the coast of Malabar.

much from their barbarous Kurdish neighbours, and from the misrule of the authorities on both sides of the frontier. Those of them who inhabit the Tyari country—the chief centre of their population—are, however, but little more civilised than the nominally Mussulman tribes around them, and, when they can, avenge their wrongs by reprisals as savage as the raids that provoke them. The hierarchy of the sect consists of a Patriarch (who bears the title of Mar Shimoon, and resides at Asheetha, near Julamerk), eighteen metropolitans and bishops, and an unlimited number of archdeacons, priests, and deacons. The incomes of the whole of these are miserably small. That of the Patriarch is derived from a poll-tax of about 3*d.* a head on the adult males of his own diocese, and a tithe of the "first-fruits" presented yearly by the people to their respective churches throughout the patriarchate; besides which he sometimes commutes for money fines the much-dreaded sentence of excommunication with which serious offences against either Church or State are generally punished. The metropolitans and bishops levy a similar tax, and at harvest time receive small voluntary gifts in kind; while the three lower grades—who alone may marry—are dependent on trifling fees and labour help in cultivating patches of ground. The office of Patriarch is hereditary in one family, and both its incumbent and the metropolitans and bishops are rigorously prohibited from tasting animal food. As regards the precise doctrines

of the sect there is, in the absence of any standard confession of faith, considerable difference of statement among writers on the subject.[1] It may be broadly said, however, that while they hold the duality of both the nature and person of Christ they reject the *filioque* and abjure auricular confession, image worship, belief in purgatory, and most of the other distinguishing dogmas of the Romish Church. They have, however, many rigid fasts, pray to the Virgin Mary and the saints, and attach great efficacy to the sign of the Cross. They had anciently seven sacraments,[2] but many of these have fallen into disuse. The Eucharist is administered to adults in both kinds, and is regarded with none of the mysterious sacredness of the Romish mass. Their church services are also very simple, and the liturgy, though written and read in ancient Syriac, is explained by the priest in the vernacular, a dialect of the old national tongue. And, finally, caring little for councils or canons, they hold to the Bible as the ultimate rule in both faith and morals.

This primitive simplicity of doctrine and ritual has not, however, saved the sect from the common misfortune of internal dissensions and schism. In 1551 a dispute about the election of a Patriarch split it

[1] Dr. Badger's learned and elaborate work, *The Nestorians and their Rituals*, is perhaps the most authoritative exposition of both the dogmas and church services of the sect.

[2] 1. Ordination; 2. baptism; 3. the Eucharist; 4. marriage; 5. the oil of unction; 6. the holy leaven; and 7. the sign of the cross.

into two factions, the weaker of which transferred its allegiance to Rome, to which a small colony of the sect settled in Cyprus had already been gained over more than a century earlier. It was not however till 1681, when the bishop of Diarbekir, having quarrelled with his patriarch, similarly seceded and was consecrated by the Pope Patriarch of the Chaldæan Church, that the schism assumed the definite shape it has since maintained. This name 'Chaldæan' is often erroneously applied to the whole Nestorian community, though properly belonging only to these papal proselytes from the parent sect Dr Badger reckons the total number of these Papal Nestorians at 20,000, scattered over a large surface of country, extending from Diarbekir to the Persian frontier, and from the southern Tyari country to Baghdad It was not till 1845 that they were recognised by the Porte as a separate community, but in that year their primate, with the aid of the French Embassy, obtained a firman acknowledging him as patriarch of the new sect Their official relations with the Government are, however, still carried on through the United Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople. Besides the patriarchate, their hierarchy comprises eight bishoprics, and their lower clergy, like that of the orthodox Nestorians, includes the three orders of archdeacons, priests, and deacons, the whole of whom are supported, like those of the parent Church, by a small capitation tax, some trifling fees, and voluntary offerings in kind from their people.

In connection with this sect, again, the excellent work of the American missionaries calls for special mention. In 1834 the Boston Board opened a station at Oroomiah, on the Persian side of the frontier, and two years later Mr. Perkins, the first agent, had so far mastered the then unwritten vernacular as to reduce it to writing. Ten years later he completed a translation of the New Testament into the vulgar dialect, to which, in 1854, he added a similar version of the Old Testament, both of which were printed for the first time at the mission press from type modelled from the best Syrian manuscripts. Many thousand copies of other elementary works were also printed and circulated, and schools were opened at Oroomiah and all the larger villages of the plain and the adjoining hill country, the object here again being less to proselytise than to educate the young and civilise the adult population. A personal visit to Oroomiah some years ago enables me to testify that in both directions the result has well repaid the zeal and labour employed. Later, at Mosul, Mardin, and Diarbekir, I witnessed similar fruits of the excellent judgment with which other agents of the same Board have laboured among the Chaldæans and Syrian-Jacobites of the middle and upper Tigris Valley, seeking there also, by the force mainly of education, rather to reform than to convert, and, although here opposed by the papal missionaries—whose devotion and energy also compel admiration

—exerting a marked and most salutary influence on both the religious and social life of the people.

There remain to be noticed the Syrian-Jacobites and the Maronites, who, with the miscellaneous aggregate of direct converts to Romanism known as "Latins," complete the tale of Turco-Asian Christianity. The former owe their name, though not their distinctive doctrine, to Jacobus Baradæus, a monophysite bishop of Edessa, who, after the anathema of Eutyches by the Council of Chalcedon, in 451, for his heresy of the one nature and one person of Christ, placed himself at the head of the large though persecuted branch of the Syrian Church which adhered to the condemned tenet. Between the sixth and tenth centuries the sect became numerous and powerful, its hierarchy at one time comprising no fewer than a hundred and fifty prelates; but it has long declined, and besides its primate—who resides at Mardin and still claims to be called "Patriarch of Antioch and successor of St. Peter"—now musters only eight metropolitans and three bishops, with about 50,000 members, chiefly settled in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Notwithstanding the labours of the American missionaries, both clergy and laity are still sunk in the grossest ignorance and superstition, and hence, doubtless, the success of the rival Catholic agents in winning over large numbers of both to the pale of Rome. Truth compels the acknowledgment, however, that the "Syrian Catholics," as the new sub-sect thus

formed is called, have benefited much by the change and contrast in every way favourably with the parent community.

A much more ancient and important secession from the Jacobites, however, than this small body of Syrian Catholics survives in the Maronites, who for nearly twelve centuries have occupied in the Lebanon an altogether exceptional position among the Christians of Syria. In the ecclesiastical strife of the seventh century their ancestors—then of the national Church—adopted the monothelite compromise between the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches; but being worsted in the contest, they fled from the plains into the mountains behind Beyrout, under John Maro, their bishop, and have there ever since maintained not merely their religious freedom, but substantial administrative independence. In 1180 they abjured their monothelitism and submitted to Rome, retaining, however, their own distinct Church establishment, the right to elect their patriarch (who only receives his investiture from the Pope), their own ecclesiastical language, and the right of marriage for their secular clergy before ordination; but, barring these differences, they are "more papist than the Pope." Although a brave and industrious people, they are illiterate and superstitious, and priest-ridden beyond perhaps any other Christian sect in Turkey. The extent of this ecclesiastical subjection may be inferred from the fact that, with a total population of 260,000, they maintain, besides an episcopate of eight bishops and

twelve hundred secular clergy, no fewer than eighty-two monasteries and convents, with more than 2,000 monks and nuns, consuming an annual revenue of 70,000*l.* The misfortunes provoked by their own imprudence in 1860 excited a totally undeserved sympathy in Europe, from which they have since largely benefited under the special administration then wrung from the Porte; but, notwithstanding the many advantages thus enjoyed for nearly eighteen years, they are still religiously not in advance of, while socially much below, both their Greek and Armenian fellow-subjects.

For the "Latins" a line or two will suffice. In its widest application the term comprehends all Roman Catholic subjects of the Porte, of whatever race, with the exception of the United Armenians, and includes therefore several of the sects already separately noticed; but its practical application is limited in Asiatic Turkey to the small community of Aleppines, and in Europe to such Albanians, Bulgarians, Croats, and Bosniacs as follow the Romish liturgy. The whole are ecclesiastically subject to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, and for civil purposes form a separate community, enjoying many special privileges and governed by a delegate (*vakeel*) named by the Porte, assisted by a council of four elected members. The Aleppine or Asiatic branch numbers about 15,000, of whom about 9,000 belong to the pashalic whence they take their name, and the remainder chiefly to Mosul and Baghdad. The community has

long enjoyed the especial protection of the Catholic Powers, and for this reason and the many substantial advantages that flow from it is regarded with much jealousy by the other Rayah sects.

It remains to mention the Jews, of whom about 60,000 are scattered throughout these Eastern provinces. The great majority are foreigners, descendants mostly of the immigration from Spain into various parts of the Levant on the expulsion of the race by Ferdinand and Isabella. A few of the old native race are, however, still to be found in Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablous, Tiberias, and Damascus, as also in the desert near Hit and in some remote villages beyond the Tigris—relics these last of the Babylonish captivity, and differing markedly in *physique* from the common type of their Western co-religionists. In Smyrna, Beyrout, and other large coast towns there are also several members of the nation, whose more recent ancestors emigrated at different periods from England, Italy, and Germany, and who still retain their European nationality, with its many attendant privileges.[1] The great majority of the whole are Talmudists, only a small minority being Caraites (who adhere to the letter of the Pentateuch) and still fewer members of the minor sects of the Zoharites

[1] The old pious custom also of immigrating to die and be buried in the beloved soil around Jerusalem still prevails, and yearly attracts many foreign members of the race to Palestine, chiefly from Poland and Russia, where Catholic and Greek "orthodoxy" has but little abated the persecutions with which mediæval bigotry avenged the crime of Calvary.

and Chasadim. The native members of the race form, like the other Rayahs, a distinct community, recognised by the Porte, and with, like the others, its own machinery of administration. At the head of this is the *Khakham-bashi*, or Grand Rabbi, of Constantinople, assisted by a council of six notables, of whom three are rabbis appointed for life and three laymen elected annually. As there is, however, no religious hierarchy among the Jews, the Grand Rabbi enjoys no supremacy over his fellow-rabbis of the provinces: except, indeed, within his own immediate rabbinical district of the capital, he is merely the official delegate of the community to the Porte. In Asiatic Turkey there are three first-class rabbinical jurisdictions—those of Smyrna, Brousa, and Jerusalem—each of which enjoys the same religious independence and civil autonomy. On both sides of the Bosphorus the Jews everywhere enjoy perfect legal equality with the other Rayah communities, their treatment by the Porte in this respect contrasting strongly with their experience in Christian Servia and Roumania. The social condition of the nation in Turkey has much improved within recent years, and their character for both commercial and general morality compares favourably with that of most of the so-called Christian sects.

Such, rapidly sketched, are the faiths of the eight or ten different races who diversify the nationality and complicate the administration of Asiatic Turkey. To sum up the suggestions of opinion made in what

precedes, I do not hesitate to say that, after a long residence in the country, my sympathy is with the Turk rather than with his Christian fellow-subjects of whatever sect. But by the Turk I mean the honest, uncontaminated Osmanli of the provinces, not his degenerate *hemsherry* of the capital, and least of all the official caste. This last, with some few exceptions, deserves its evil repute to the full, but even its vices are less chargeable to the national character and religion than to the corrupt "civilisation" acquired during education in Paris or Vienna, or in baser adulteration still, in Pera and Stamboul. Indeed, as a rule, a Turk who speaks French is no longer a Turk at all; he has become ashamed of his own creed, and recognises the moral restraints neither of it nor of any other. But not so his compatriot of the provinces, who is proud of his faith and obeys its laws, which for him are not merely theoretical obligations of religion but practical rules of life. Hence the truth, honesty, temperance, and sexual morality, which distinguish the country Mussulman of this type from his demoralised fellows of Stamboul, and from nearly every class of the Rayah population. Fanatical he may be—though in my own experience the fact is much exaggerated in popular western opinion; but it is a fanaticism born of an honest pride in a simpler faith and a purer moral code than he sees exemplified among the corrupt and mutually hostile sects around him, from whose semi-idolatrous worship and low average of morals his conceptions

of Christianity are necessarily formed. On the other hand, apologists of Christian degeneracy, may justly plead long centuries of oppressive and socially degrading misrule—though, if Gibbon and Mr. Finlay are to be believed, there was little to choose between Byzantine and Ottoman rulers in this respect. But long and ruinous as this has been under both, a single generation of strong and just government would go far to undo its effects, and by placing Christian and Mussulman on the same level before paramount law, to weld the many varieties of both into a homogeneous national whole.

CHAPTER X.

RESOURCES AND PRODUCTS.

Great natural wealth of the whole—Asia Minor in this respect compares favourably with any part of Europe—Syria and Chaldæa rank next—Physical riches of all five divisions have as yet been merely tapped—Extent and fertility of arable soil—All the conditions of successful husbandry especially abundant in Asiatic provinces — Present condition of the country no measure of its capabilities — Cereals the staple produce — Cultivation limited through want of access to markets—Tobacco, opium, silk, cotton—Their varieties, and chief producing districts—Other products—Mineral deposits—Every sort except platina—Proximity of metallic and carboniferous beds—Coal-fields of Erekli—Their quality and great extent—At present badly worked—Coal beds elsewhere—Iron, copper, argentiferous lead, emery, bitumen, sulphur, and rock salt—Absurd mining laws—Forests — Their varieties, and imperfect protection—Fisheries—Their official mismanagement—Quarries, and sponge fisheries—Essential conditions of utilising this varied physical wealth—Little hope of its development under the Porte.

In nearly every variety of the raw material of national wealth the Asiatic provinces of Turkey are splendidly rich. Asia Minor especially will in this respect compare with any country of Europe. Its density of population, though greater than that of the other four divisions, is of course much below the average of Western Europe; but, barring this, no

country from the Bosphorus to the Scheldt more abounds in the elements of great material prosperity. Syria and Chaldæa rank next in order of potential wealth; and even Kurdistan and Yemen, though historically discouraging, have in them much that vigorous and enlightened government might mint into contributions to national strength. It is hardly too much to say that although these splendid regions formed the cradle of mankind and the subsequent seat of the greatest empires in history, their stores of natural wealth have as yet been merely tapped, and that reserves surpassing all that Assyrian, Roman, Greek, Seljuk, or Ottoman ever touched, await in virgin abundance the developing skill and industry of a more advanced civilisation. The extent and variety of these physical riches would form matter for a volume, and can therefore be little more than hinted at in a single chapter. But even within these limits, enough may be said to show that what Turkey has lost of fiscal capital in Europe may be recouped to her many fold in Asia by utilising the resources nature has dowered her with in almost every province.

The extent and fertility of the arable soil form, of course, the chief of these primary sources of national prosperity. On both sides of the Bosphorus nature has fitted Turkey to be a great agricultural country, but in Asia the geological and climatic conditions of successful husbandry combine in a degree seldom equalled in Europe. Hence nearly every kind of agricultural produce known to commerce may be

raised on a scale of abundance limited only by the labour and intelligence employed. The present condition of the country, it need hardly be said, supplies no measure of its full capabilities; but even as it is, the merest bird's-eye glance at its chief products, under all the existing disadvantages of gross fiscal abuses, the most primitive rudeness of culture, and the want of outlets for everything grown beyond the actual needs of local consumption, will show how rich and wide is the field awaiting only better government and a moderate infusion of western skill and capital to become again one of the most productive in the world.

The great staple crops are first, of course, cereals, amongst which wheat, barley, maize, and rice rank in the order stated. Garden produce is everywhere abundant, and, so varied is the climatic range, that nearly every sort of fruit known to the temperate and torrid zones grows, with little or no culture, in profusion. Gooseberries and pine-apples are almost the only varieties of these last I have not met with in one or other of the four divisions of the country I have personally visited. Wheat is the first great staple everywhere, and the field for its production is practically limitless; but, with the absence of roads and the consequent high cost of transport, its cultivation, beyond the wants of local consumption is mainly confined to the neighbourhood of the seaboard. So, too, with the other cereals; their scale of production diminishes as the field for it extends

inland, till round, say, Angora, Sivas, Kharpout, Van, and Mosul, they contribute little or nothing to export trade. They feed men and cattle at a rate of cheapness unknown anywhere in Europe, but they add little to either the wealth of the population or the income of the State. After grain crops come tobacco, opium, silk, and cotton, the first three of which are already of great commercial value, and all capable of vast increase on the present scale of their production. The chief tobacco growing districts in Asia Minor are, in the order of their produce—Samsoun with Batin and Tzenik, Smyrna with Magnesia and Pergama, Trebizond, Ismidt with Uscup and Mihalitz, and Sinope; while Syria and Mesopotamia also add largely to the gross result. The best quality of the whole is that grown in Syria, where from Aleppo down to below Beyrout it forms one of the staple crops of the country. The choicest growths are those of the Ansarieh district behind Latakia and Kouna, near Tripoli. The best of all, called *Abu-richa* (father of perfume) goes almost wholly to Egypt, whilst Europe only gets the *sheikh-el-bent*, *dgiar* and other less delicate varieties. Tobacco, indeed, may be said to rank first among the products of the Lebanon, the resources of which are almost exclusively agricultural. Opium may be called a specialty of Anatolia, for although the poppy is also largely grown in Roumelia, the Asiatic variety is richer in the principal alkaloid, and consequently

ranks higher in commerce. The plant is chiefly cultivated near Angora and in the pashalic of Aïdin, round Smyrna, the produce of the latter being the most esteemed. Mulberry trees grow almost everywhere, but are mainly utilised for silk and cocoons in the districts of Brousa, the neighbourhood of Diarbekir, northern Syria, and the Lebanon. A species of wild silk, called *qez* and *jel*, grows extensively in Kurdistan between Zakho and Rowanduz, but, although much prized and worked by the Kurdish women, it has not yet found its way into Western commerce. The production and subsequent preparation of the filament form the chief industry of Brousa, whence the export of the raw article and of cocoons averages in value about 350,000*l.* a year. The cultivation round Diarbekir is less developed, but there also the soil and climate are excellently adapted to its pursuit on a large scale. In Syria, however, it rivals tobacco as a local staple, and in the lower and middle ranges of the Lebanon employs a large number of hands, first in preparing the crude material and then in reeling it, chiefly for the French market. In all these centres of silk culture the best filament is produced from Japanese eggs, but the frauds played upon growers in connection with these —other much inferior foreign seed being often palmed off as veritable "Yeddo"—have greatly damaged the quality of Turkish silk, and correspondingly affected the industry both at Brousa and in Syria. During and for some time after the American war,

cotton seemed likely to become one of the great products of Turkey, but the promise of that exceptional period has not been kept. In Egypt alone has the stimulus then given to the culture been maintained. Considerable quantities are still grown in various districts of Anatolia, but in Syria and Mesopotamia—in the latter of which especially the field for its production is almost limitless—the produce of the staple now again but little exceeds the local wants.

Valonea, madder, gall nuts, yellowberries, and fruit complete the chief vegetable products of which note need here be taken. The first of these is the acorn cup of an oak (*Quercus ægilops*) that grows abundantly throughout Anatolia, in some parts of Armenia, and .in Kurdistan. The cups contain from thirty to thirty-seven per cent. of tannin, and are therefore exported, especially from Smyrna, in large quantities to Europe for tanning purposes. Madder, the root of the *Rubia tinctorum*, is a red dyeing material of great importance: the plant is a native of the South of Europe, Asia Minor, and British India, but is also now grown extensively in Holland, France, and Spain; but Turkey madder ranks highest in the market, and forms one of the chief exports from Smyrna. The cultivation of madder is very profitable, and under better conditions of administrative encouragment might be greatly extended. Gall nuts are excrescences on the leaves of another oak (*Quercus infectoria*) which likewise contain tannic acid and

a yellow extractive matter also of value in dyeing. These, too, are very plentiful in Asia Minor, but are found in still greater abundance and of better quality in northern Syria. Yellowberries (the unripe fruit of the *Rhamnus infectorius*, which is also used as a dye drug) grow throughout Asia Minor and the eastern Taurus, and figure importantly among the exports of Alexandretta and Smyrna. Of fruit, commercially the most valuable are the nuts of the southern Black Sea coast, the raisins and dried figs that form so large an element in the trade of Smyrna, and the dates which within the past eight or ten years have become nearly as valuable an export from southern Chaldæa. Fresh grapes and oranges are in similar plenty, but as they equally abound all round the Mediterranean, they are of but small trade account. Though belonging to another class of products, mention may be here made of mohair—the silky fleece of the famed Angora goat—and sheep's wool, both of which, like most of what precede, admit of great increase in their present aggregate of production. The district within which the best mohair (locally called *tiftik*) is grown is limited to the neighbourhood of Angora, outside which the goats do not thrive, and their fleece greatly deteriorates in quality. But here again the oppressive taxation levied on both the animals and their hair keeps the flocks much below the pasturage capacity of the locality, which even before the great mortality of the winter of 1875-6 had killed off nearly half the goats then

maintained, would, it is estimated, suffice for more than three times the number commonly kept. Flocks of the same species of goat are found near Samsoun and Van, but their clip is much inferior in quality to that of their Angora congeners. Wool, though bulk for bulk much less valuable, ranks high among the products of these Asiatic provinces. In fact, with proper protection against the tax-gatherer and his moral compeers, the Kurd and the Bedoween, sheep farming in Anatolia, eastern Syria, and Mesopotamia might become one of the most profitable industries in all this wide dominion from the Bosphorus to the Gulf.

But rich and varied as are these agricultural and pastoral resources and products of the country, they hardly exceed in value the more directly physical wealth that abounds both above and below the surface of the soil, and in the waters, inland and maritime, of this most favoured empire. Among these what may be called crude elements of national prosperity, the various mineral deposits rank first. The soil of Anatolia especially is largely composed of those earlier rocks which are known to be the most rich in minerals, rocks in fact to which some of the most valuable of these are altogether confined. The country is said, indeed, to possess every sort of metal except platina. Not only, too, are most of the mineral districts near either the sea or navigable rivers, but—what is even of more importance—the metallic and carboniferous beds are found close to, or

within practicable distance of, each other. We have thus, in many instances, the proximity of coal and iron which has made the fortune of Staffordshire, and the absence of which in Spain has rendered the rich mines of the Asturias nearly valueless. According to the official records of the Porte, in all some 250 mines of various ores have been discovered throughout the Empire, three-fourths of which are in Asia. Most of these latter were formerly worked, but the great majority have been abandoned through want of capital or for other reasons, leaving only about thirty now at work, and not one of these to the full limit of its producing capacity. Of this small number, nine were last year worked for Government account and the remainder by private concessionnaires. Nearest to the capital, and first in value to the mechanical industries of the country, are the immense coal-fields of Erekli (Heraclea), a small town of some 4,000 inhabitants on the south coast of the Black Sea, about 115 miles east of the Bosphorus. This great bed—or rather district, for it runs nearly eighty miles east and west along the sea, with an average width inland of about five miles—was discovered in 1841, but no systematic attempt was made to extract the fuel till just before the Crimean war, when two English engineers[1] were engaged by the Porte to superintend the operations. Although these were conducted unde

[1] The Messrs. Barkley, since well known from their connection with the Bulgarian and Dobrudja railways, and the Roumanian iron bridges.

the disadvantages of unskilled native labour and very imperfect mechanical resources, the coal was found so suitable for steam purposes that, shortly after the breaking out of the war, one of the mines (the Uselmez) was leased by the British Government, and its fuel largely used by our own and the French fleets during the next couple of years. The coal at many points crops out on the surface, and the seams vary in thickness from three to eighteen feet, but it is so badly extracted that the fragments of shale and other dirt mixed with it deprive it of half its value, and compel the Porte itself to purchase English coal largely for its navy and military factories. Yet an official trial, made a few years ago under the direction of the English chief engineer of the Arsenal, showed that of three samples carefully extracted from different seams, the first was equal to the best Welsh coal, the second to the best Newcastle, and the third, though inferior to the latter, better than most of the English coal offered in the Constantinople market. The best qualities are found near Kosloo, also on the coast, about twenty miles east of Erekli, and are mined at distances varying from half a mile to two miles inland by means of short inclines run into the face of the hill, at the end of which galleries are carried right and left to reach the best fuel. From the mouths of these the coal is brought in baskets on horseback down to the shore, and then shot into the small native coasters which convey it to the Bosphorus during the summer months. This vast property

forms part of the Sultan's private domain, and although most advantageous offers have been frequently made by foreign capitalists for a lease of it, petty palace influences have defeated all attempts to thus adequately utilise it, and for more than twenty years have either jobbed the mines among native favourites, or worked them at little or no profit for direct account of the Civil List. Under either system they have been so badly worked that, with all its adulterations, the coal cannot be sold in Constantinople under eighteen or nineteen shillings a ton, the rate it costs the Government, which is now almost its only consumer. Yet it has been competently reckoned that a thoroughly clean coal, equal to the best Northumberland produce, might be remuneratively delivered in the Golden Horn at 20 per cent. less, while English fuel averages thirty shillings per ton the year round. Next in importance to these great Heraclea deposits, is a large tertiary coal-field on the summit of the Darhalla-dagh, near Kirkagatch, thirty-six miles from the Magnesia Station on the Smyrna and Cassaba Railway. The coal here lies in a nearly horizontal bed on the summit of the mountain, along the sides of which also vast seams are exposed at distances of from two hundred yards to three miles apart. The produce of this great field is of excellent quality, and especially free from sulphur, but no systematic attempt has been made to work it, though a very careful estimate reckons that the coal might, with the help of a cheap minerals railway from

Kirkagatch to Magnesia, be delivered in almost limitless quantities at a clear profit of at least ten shillings a ton in Smyrna, where local consumption, the wants of steamers frequenting the port, and of other parts of the Levant, would create a ready market for all that could be sent down. Yet other deposits have been found on both shores of the Bosphorus and along the Marmora; at Turbali, between Smyrna and Aïdin; at Nazli, beyond the latter town; at Chermork, fifty miles south-west of Diarbekir; at a village near Van, as also at Jezireh on the Tigris, and in the neighbourhood of Baghdad; but only at this last point and at Turbali and Nazli has any attempt been made to utilize the discovery. The Baghdad mineral is of inferior quality, being very bituminous, and therefore smoky and dirty; but for river steam navigation and other industrial purposes it is still of great value in a thinly-wooded country such as is nearly all southern Chaldæa. Lignite has also been found in abundance at various points, and is mined near Brousa and Castamouni, and in the islands of Scio and Imbros, but only on a small scale for local consumption. Worked, however, with Western skill and capital, the vast fields along the Black Sea would suffice for all the coal wants of the empire, and leave a large surplus for southern Russia and the other markets of the Levant.

But coal is only one of the many varieties of mineral wealth awaiting development throughout

these nature-blessed provinces. Plentiful traces of ironstone, its metallic complement, have been found in the Erekli-Kosloo district close along the coal beds, as also still richer ore, yielding above 70 per cent. of pure metal, in the Liman-dagh, near Kharpout, and 100 miles south-west at Marash, and mines of chromate and sulphuret of iron at Brousa, Bishfarmak-Jimeli and Devredjian, near Castamouni. The range of hills inland of Adramytti, above Mytilene, is also chiefly composed of sulphuret of iron; while magnetic iron abounds on the slopes of the Boz-dagh, which forms the southern boundary of the Hermus valley, and of the Koja-dagh, between the Tuz-göl and Yenishehr. But copper is still more abundant. East of Kosloo, and within fifteen miles of the coast, are the rich but now unworked mines of this metal at Bakir-Kurchai, which three centuries ago enabled the Turkoman emir of Sinope, their then tenant, to pay most of his tribute of 200,000 ducats a year. Inland of this again, in the same province, is another mine at Kuréi-nooshass, and farther east one at Tepé-khan, near Diarbekir, from both of which only a very trifling annual yield is obtained. More important, however, than the whole of these are the great copper deposits near Arghana-maden, on the slopes of the Taurus. These are perhaps the richest mines of this metal in Anatolia, yet though their ore contains an average of from 12 to 15 per cent. of fine copper, and the mines are worked on Govern-

ment account, their yearly outcome is less than 500 tons of refined copper, a poverty of result that is partly explained by the transport of the ore on horse or camel back over a journey of more than sixty-four hours to be refined at Tocat, but still more by the want of system and energy in the working. It was demonstrated to the Government a few years ago that, for an outlay of about 60,000*l.* on improved working appliances and a road, the profits of this enterprise might be more than decupled, but the suggestion, though approved of, was remitted to the limbo of so many other Turkish "reforms," and, except the commencement of a road between Bilejik on the Euphrates, and Aleppo—which was discontinued after a few kilometres had been made outside the latter town—nothing has since been done to improve either plant or bridle-track. Less rich but still valuable beds of copper exist also near Baibourt, between Trebizond and Erzeroum, at present wholly unworked, at Tireboli on the coast, whose mines, though now neglected, once yielded from 150 to 200 tons of the pure metal a year, and finally at Eleben, some twenty miles south of these last, are other rich deposits of this metal which have never been worked at all. Argentiferous lead ranks next in abundance and value. The whole of the low mountain district through which the Kizil-Irmak winds between Iskelib and Marsivan, is known to be rich in veins of this ore, but only one small mine of it is worked, at Gumush-maden

neȧr Osmanjik. Away, nearly due south of this, the Bulgar-dagh mines in the Taurus, near Adana, were discovered and profitably worked during thc Egyptian occupation, but with the expulsion of Ibrahim Pasha the industry ceased. The Kebben-maden mines, also of this lead and ochreous silver, though rich and extensive, produce less than a ton of the refined metal a year. Similarly, the great deposits at Gumush-khaneh near Trebizond—once the most productive of all the silver mines of Asia —are now almost forsaken, their annual net yield seldom exceeding 100 lbs. Other beds of this mixed ore exist at Alaïdin and Bereketli, both near Kornieh, at Guebon and Piridjman, near Diarbekir, and, in the islands, in great abundance in Imbros. Argentiferous galena has also been plentifully found at Akdagh-maden, in the district of Tocat, but though the veins crop up in the very midst of forests, and labour is both abundant and cheap, not an ounce of the ore is here extracted. On the slopes of the Ishik-dagh, in the pashalic of Angora, like wealth in vain invites extraction, as also again at Dessek-maden, in the same province, within ten miles of the navigable Kizil-Irmak. Emery equal in quality to the best in Naxos is found all over the region south of Brousa to the range of the Demir-dagh, and also at several points between Smyrna and Aïdin, whence, even as at present worked, it forms a valuable item in the trade of the great Ionian port. It exists in still greater abundance near Kutaya, but the cost of

its transport thence to the sea renders its working in that neighbourhood economically impossible. Similarly, along both the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, and also in central Mesopotamia, bitumen and petroleum abound, bubbling to the surface at a hundred points, but are only utilised for the trifling fuel wants of the Kurdish and Arab villages scattered at wide intervals over these once populous but now desert wastes. So plentiful indeed is bitumen all down the basin of the Euphrates that Colonel Chesney proposed to burn nothing else on the line of steamers his expedition was intended, forty years ago, to pioneer on that river. If the grander scheme of a railway from Syria to the Gulf should be carried out, the same exhaustless resource will be available for locomotive consumption, either alone or mixed with coal, along three-fourths of the line. Sulphur is found at many points of Western Asia Minor, notably in great abundance near Aleshehr, and in the deposits of hot springs at Brousa, Islam-keui, Hamman-lar, and elsewhere. And, finally, very pure rock salt exists in plenty, and is worked on Government account, near Saert, in Kurdistan; but here, as everywhere else, the potential far exceeds the actual produce.

Such are some of the best known mineral deposits of the country, enough of themselves, if properly worked, to enrich it greatly. But in addition to these the most superficial surveys have revealed indications of like treasures in nearly every pro-

vince of the empire, surrounded in many instances by the most encouraging conditions as to labour, fuel, and in some also as to facility of carriage. Why, then, it may be asked, are not these immense and ready sources of national wealth developed? The obstacles are so varied and radical that, if left to the unstimulated action of the Porte itself, there is, I fear, little prospect of their being removed or overcome. The apathy of the native population, the lack of native capital and skill, the want of roads, and the virtually prohibitory nature of the existing mining law, all combine to keep the industry within its present profitless limits. Of these hindrances, the last mentioned is perhaps the greatest, barring as it does the way against the ingress of foreign resources and influences which would in time meet both the other wants. Western capital and enterprise are, it need hardly be said, the sole adequate key to these buried treasures, and these are effectually shut out by the conditions under which alone mineral concessions to foreigners are now granted.[1] Yet both have long awaited only

[1] Thus, to mention only one or two of these absurd restrictions : besides the initial difficulties opposed by official jealousy to such grants at all, in the shape of a most vexatious routine and heavy fines of inevitable *backsheesh* at every step in the application, the firman when obtained limits the right of working to such mineral as may have been specified in the original demand; so that should tin, say, be found below copper, or silver mixed with lead, a fresh firman must be obtained before any but the originally specified ore can be extracted. So, too, every mine must be worked subject to the

encouragement to enter the field, and to work it with a success which, while repaying the investment, would in moderate royalties alone largely swell the present revenue of the Porte. Nor would the advantages to the Government and the country be confined to mere present money gains. Foreign skill and guidance would gradually educate a competent body of native engineers and a native mining population fit in after years to carry on the industry for native account, and to develop it to an extent which would, at no distant day, raise Turkey to the rank nature has designed her for among the mining countries of the world.

Next to its minerals, the forests of the country invite working on a scale of nearly equal profit and extent. These abound in almost every province, and except for the purposes of fuel—in which the waste is enormous—of the commoner class of house building, and the wants of the rude native carpentry, their splendid produce is scarcely utilised at all. This is in part explained by the anomalous laws and customs affecting forest lands, and in part by the administrative apathy and neglect which blight almost every material interest of the country. Thus there are three or four different varieties of forestal property,

interference in all its administrative details of an ignorant and greedy Government "district engineer," whose unfavourable report—only avertible by bribery—may lead to a stoppage of the works, or even the cancelling of the firman. The Mining Code, by which the industry is at present regulated, abounds in such, as I have said, virtually prohibitory provisions.

each with its own special incidents: (1) the *kouron* class, owned by individuals, whether land be *mulk* or *vacouf;*[1] (2) *baltalik* forests, which are communal or village property, be the tenure of the land what it may; (3) the *baltalik musterek* class, over which several neighbouring villages have common rights, and (4) the *jebel-ul-bagh* or mountain forests, which belong to the State, and form the most extensive class of the whole. Till within a dozen years ago, there was absolutely no law controlling this great element of national wealth, and the wasteful abuse of it was consequently enormous. Every village and almost every individual cut, burned, and otherwise did as seemed good in its and his eyes with forest trees all over the country. About that time, however, A'ali Pasha awakened to a sense of the mischief thus being done, more especially in the forests nearest the capital by charcoal burners and other purveyors of firewood, and appointed a "forestal council," with a staff of inspectors, to take charge of all the State timber throughout the empire, and generally to check the wanton destruction then going on in both government and communal forest lands. Almost the only result was the issue of some vexatious restrictions which while they did not put a stop to the old abuses, impeded legitimate trade, and so soon perforce became a dead letter. The "council" still figures, however, in the official machinery of a sub-department

[1] See p. 128, vol. ii., for explanation of these tenures.

of the Ministry of Finance, and is credited, amongst other budgetary fictions, with garnering into the Treasury, from the whole empire, a gross revenue of 150,000*l.* a year, at a cost of 80,000*l.* for administration ; but though its members and agents continue to draw their salaries (when they can get them), they do little or nothing to protect, and still less to profitably develop, this almost virgin element of national wealth. In the meantime, the substitution of iron for wood in naval shipbuilding has deprived these forests of their chief value to the State, and as little or no compensating increase has taken place in the previously trifling timber trade outwards, the vast groves of oak, boxwood, beech, maple, elm, walnut, ash, pine, and other varieties of wood that clothe the mountain slopes along three sides of Asia Minor and many of those in the interior, are as valueless for all purposes of State wealth as the unworked coal of Erekli and the copper of Tocat. Yet three-fourths of these are within comparatively easy reach of the sea, or (for raft purposes) navigable rivers, and so are available for a large export trade. Thus the great oak and pine forests of Olympus, behind Brousa, are within little more than twenty miles of the Marmora, with, if not a good, at least a passable connecting road; those of Ismidt, higher up, are still nearer to the coast or to the Sakaria river, which runs through forty miles of the finest woodland between Scutari and Kars; and so on along the whole southern coast of the Black Sea, past the dense groves behind

Sinope, Tireboli, and Trebizond, splendid timber abounds everywhere, needing only the axe and the saw to become nearly as marketable as cotton or wool. From Olympus to the new boundary of the Soghanli-dagh—the only use of whose miles of ash, elm, and oak is to supply firewood to Kars and Erzeroum—and thence southward to the Kurdish hills east of Mosul, below which trees become rarer, these Asiatic provinces teem with forestal riches. It may be an anti-climax to say that if no more profitable use can be made of much of this, it will at all events yield an abundant supply of sleepers and auxiliary fuel to the network of railways that may now be expected to spread over the country.

From the great extent of its coast line and the considerable area of its inland lakes, the fisheries of Asiatic Turkey might be expected to form an important element of national wealth, but here again, not alone lack of Government encouragement, but almost prohibitory fiscal restrictions, have prevented all but the meagrest development of this rich resource. Patches of fishing ground near the principal coast towns are leased out to "farmers," who usually sublet, all around from Trebizond to Syria, but on no uniform system, and with more than half the entire seaboard left, so to speak, fallow. Instead of making revenue out of the whole littoral on the basis of a survey showing the most frequented grounds, and issuing licenses at a moderate rate to fish within the limits of separate contracts, the vicious system has

been, and still generally is, to farm out particular sections of the coast at low rents, and then to levy an oppressive *ad valorem* tax on the produce. The triple result is that the Government loses revenue, the working industry is unduly handicapped, and consumption is checked by retail prices out of all proportion to what, but for this fiscal impolicy, would be the superabundant supply.[1] Thus, while the rentals of long tracts of deep-sea fishing-ground are in many instances absurdly low, the *meereh*, or Government tax, on the fish caught averages about 21 per cent. on fresh fish, and (including 8 per cent. customs duty, 1 per cent. for "barrel money," and 1 per cent. for permit to sell) about 31 per cent. on salted fish, even if sold for inland consumption, *plus*, in both cases, about 3 per cent. more for the personal license of the fisherman to follow his calling, and for the commission paid to the *baluk-haneh*, or guild market-place, for disposing of the produce sent in. The actual trade in fish, on which the prosperity of the industry depends, is thus hampered at every step, and what might be a source of revenue to the Government, of profitable employment to large numbers of the maritime population, and of cheap food to all classes, is less than half worked, to the general detriment of the whole. The lake and river fisheries

[1] During the Greek and Armenian Lents, red mullet, for instance, though it swarms in the Bosphorus and on the adjacent coasts of the Black Sea, often costs in Galata eighty piastres an oke (about five shillings a pound), and the other better class white fish in proportion.

lying within a smaller compass, are rather better managed, though as regards them also the tax tariffs and system of official control vary widely in different parts of the empire, and in none are calculated to foster the industry. Commerce in fish depends mainly on a demand for the salted article, and although the great herring shoals which have in this form enriched the Dutch are not met with in the Euxine or the Ægean, other varieties abound in both which are equally suitable for the Lent-keeping millions of Greek and Armenian consumers in the country itself and half round the Black Sea and Mediterranean. It is not to be hoped that, with an Asiatic population, the industry will ever attain the extension that has been reached in Western Europe, but making full allowance for inferior energy and every other local drawback, it is incontestable that, with better governmental encouragement, this piscine wealth of Turkey might be developed into the staple of a large and profitable trade.[1]

[1] It may be worth while to note a few of the chief varieties of fish in Turkish waters. Of the sea kinds, the largest is the *kiupek*, or dog-fish, a species of shark which frequents the coast of Syria, the Ægean, and the Marmora, but seldom enters the Black Sea ; this fish attains a length of from ten to twelve feet, with proportionate girth, but only the smaller specimens of it are brought to market and retailed in slices to the poor : the *yan-ooz*, or porpoise, great shoals of which are met with in all these seas and in the Bosphorus, where they are nearly as plentiful as sea-gulls in the Golden Horn or *âmes damnées* in the main channel ; but these fish are not eaten : the *kilitch*, or sword-fish, varying from twenty to eighty pounds weight ; this is a fish of excellent flavour, and abounds in both the Black Sea

To this rapid catalogue may be added the quarries of valuable stone that abound in at least four of the five divisions of the country, and the sponge-fisheries of the Ægean. From the great marble strata which give its name to the Marmora, to the puce-spotted white stone of Synnada, beyond Eskishehr, the black basalt of Diarbekir and the beautiful green marble of Elbek, and thence down the Tigris valley to the marble again which built Nineveh and Nimrood, and back westwards to the granite of central Syria, whose vast columns yet defy time at Palmyra and Baalbek, every variety of the finest stone is found; but owing to the present impossibilities of transport, only the produce of the Marmora quarries, which may be almost shot into a ship's hold, can be said to have

and the Archipelago: *kalkan*, a species of turbot found in great plenty in the Black Sea; its skin is furnished with horny nodes (whence its name of "shield-fish"), but when large and fat its flesh is little, if at all, inferior to that of the species found in northern waters: *dolguer*, John-Dory, an excellent fish of good size, and in flavour much resembling grey mullet: *palamood*, a species of tunny, a portion of which is eaten fresh, but the greater part is salted and barrelled for consumption during the Greek and Armenian Lents: *iskumbry*, of the mackerel family, but much inferior to those of our coasts; they are sun-dried in great quantities, and then called *tcheros*, from their leanness: *lavrek*, a species of cod, but much more delicate than our northern fish of that name: and, to pass by a host of others, the *tekeer-baluk*, or red mullet, equal to the best brought to our own markets. Smelts and whitebait are also abundant, but soles, skate, and flounders are less plentiful. The chief fresh-water varieties are trout, eels, carp (coarse and ill-flavoured), crayfish, and a poor species of pike. Shell-fish of nearly every kind abound, but they are nearly all inferior to the crustacea of colder seas.

any commercial value. Meerschaum, too, is found in plenty near Kutaya, whence it is sent chiefly to Austria, by the dealers of that town and Eskishehr. The sponge-fisheries already contribute a substantial item to the export trade of Rhodes and Smyrna, and are almost a monopoly of the Archipelago; but here again fiscal abuse stifles enterprise, and the yield of the industry is much less than it might be under better administrative conditions.

The physical wealth of Asiatic Turkey is, it will thus be seen, vast, varied, and capable of immense development. The conditions of this, too, lie on the very surface of the facts. The first is the opening up of the country by common roads, which shall serve the double purpose of local intercommunication, and of feeders to cheaply-constructed railways connecting the chief centres of production with the sea; the second, re-adjustment of taxation, and the abolition of tax-farming with all its attendant abuses. Other reforms which it would be easy to specify are also necessary, but these are the primary conditions, precedent of any real improvement in the material and social condition of the country. But the country itself has not the means of carrying out the first, and it would be the merest delusion to hope that, promise what it may, the Porte will of its own motion make any serious effort to accomplish the second. "After me the deluge" has, in varying

degrees, been the maxim of every Sultan and vizier, since the death of Mahmoud ; and in point of unselfish patriotism and governing ability in its rulers, Turkey has never been at a lower ebb than at present.

CHAPTER XI.

GOVERNMENT.

A despotism tempered by checks—In practice, quasi-constitutional—Life and property now fairly safe—Present administrative organisation the fourth since the conquest—Dual division of empire abolished by Murad III., and replaced by system of vilayets—Loss of imperial authority under this—Failure of Selim III. to recover it—Success of Mahmoud II.—Suppression of the Derè-beys—Edict of Guthaneh, Tanzimat, and Hatti-Scheriff of 1856—Return to the old vilayet system modified in 1867—Under this, Asiatic Turkey now divided into eighteen vilayets and four special governments—Administrative machinery of a vilayet—Defective working of almost every branch of it—Fiscal abuses—Maladministration of justice—Universal corruption—Equally bad in Rayah denominational courts—Bad police—LAW the prime want of the whole—The Archipelago—Autonomy of Samos—Exceptional administrations of the Hedjaz and the Lebanon.

THE government of all Turkey, the reader need hardly be told, is a despotism tempered by certain religious and social checks which, for nearly a century, have in practice reduced the power of the Sovereign to that of a quasi-constitutional monarch.[1]

[1] In saying this, I take no account of the "abortive constitution" of Midhat Pasha, which, though nominally still in existence, is already a dead letter.

In theory the Sultan is absolute, but in fact he recognises restraints which are unknown to both the Czar and the Shah. Thus, while the lives and property of his subjects are still nominally at his mercy, he no longer either takes the one or confiscates the other except under some form of law. So far, therefore, as the caprice of the Sovereign is concerned, it may be said that both life and property are now fairly safe in Turkey. The fruitful risks to which the latter is still exposed proceed rather from subordinate official corruption and rapacity than from oppression by the central Government, and still less from the despotic action of the Sovereign himself. The personal authority of the Sultan is now, too, so much more than formerly, exercised through the Grand Vizier and his colleagues of the Divan, that, if these were always honest and able, the Porte might be safely left to work out its own political salvation, or rather this would not now be in peril. But the conditions of Turkish office are such that the few available men who are both able and honest are powerless against the many who are neither, or who, if able, are not honest to prevent the misrule which, encouraged and utilised by foreign intrigue, has disrupted the empire in Europe, and, unless abated by large reforms in Asia, must inevitably work similar ruin there.

The present administrative organisation is the fourth since the conquest of Constantinople. Mohammed II. then divided the Empire into two great

Governments—the European provinces forming one under the collective title of Roumelia, and those in Asia the other under that of Anatolia. The satraps appointed to these were the first of the historic "Pashas of three tails"—or standards with three horse-hair pennants—who have since figured so prominently in Eastern story and Western pantomime and drama. Both Roumelia and Anatolia were further parcelled out into sub-provinces, called *sanjaks*,[1] ruled by Pashas of two tails, who gradually came to arrogate, within their respective jurisdictions, the practical independence which their paramount chiefs exercised over the whole on either side of the Dardanelles. By the time of Murad III. (1574–95) the authority of the central Government had thus become disregarded or defied almost everywhere beyond the metropolitan province.

But that sovereign was still strong enough to grapple with this state of systematic rebellion, and with this view he abolished the dual division of the empire, and substituted for it a redistribution of the whole into twenty-six vilayets, subdivided into 163 sanjaks. The result, however, was rather a nominal than real recovery of the imperial authority. The governors of the new vilayets and reduced sanjaks soon proved as insubordinate as ever, and the bow-string, the poison-cup, and the dagger, employed

[1] *Anglicè* "standards," which from being borne before governors of this rank came to give their name to the jurisdiction.

by the hand of some secret agent, became almost the only means left to the Porte of asserting its power. From time to time some rebel Pasha fell dead at the close of a banquet or a Derè-bey was found a corpse in the morning with the *fetva* of the mufti nailed by a poniard to his breast. But the very secrecy with which this terrible justice was administered betrayed the weakness of the central Executive, and after a short interval of stupor things returned to their former course. For 200 years this state of chronic anarchy continued, varied only by occasional spurts of energy on the part of the Porte as opportunity offered in this province or that, or as the personal character of the sovereign impelled. At length, towards the close of the last century, throughout three-fourths of the Empire the authority of the Sultan had sunk into a mere suzerainty, acknowledged only by such tribute in money and troops as the governors and feudal chiefs chose to pay. Thus in Anatolia alone, the Kalyondjis were virtually independent throughout the modern province of Brousa; the Kara Osman-Oglous exercised similar sway to the very gates of Smyrna, over what is now the vilayet of Aïdin; the Tchafau-Oglous over all central Asia Minor, from Angora and Yuzghat to the Mediterranean; and the Kutchuk-Alis over Cilicia, on both sides of the Taurus, from Nighdeh to the Gulf of Scanderoon. Selim III. (1788–1807) made a vigorous effort to re-establish the imperial supremacy, but being opposed in his

reforms by both the Ulema and the Janissaries, he perished in the attempt. His nephew, Mahmoud II. (after the brief interval of Mustapha IV.) was more successful. By a rare combination of tact, energy, and patience, he conciliated, till strong enough to crush, the forces which had dethroned his uncle; and then, supreme in the capital, gradually reconquered the provinces—for the re-establishment of his full authority was, in many of them, virtually a re-conquest—from Widdin to Baghdad. Mehemet Ali alone defied him in Egypt, but almost everywhere else the imperial *touhra* was feared and obeyed as it had not been for two centuries and a half. One of the many important changes that followed this recovery of the Porte's authority was a new classification of the provinces made in 1834, the effect of which was to increase the number of the eyalets (as they were then called), while lessening that of the sanjaks. The powers of the governors were at the same time so reduced that almost every important act of administration was made dependent on Stamboul, without special reference to which—even in those days, long before railways and telegraphs—a road tax could not be levied nor a brigand hanged anywhere between Bosnia and the Gulf. The authority of the Sultan was thus, indeed, substituted for the feudal despotism of the Valley Lords and other petty tyrants who had previously defied it, but at the cost of weakening the provincial executive to a degree that made vigorous administration

impossible. The next thirty years witnessed the famous edict of Gul-haneh, the proclamation of Tanzimat, the Hatti-Scheriff of 1856, and sundry modifications of Mahmoud's geographical scheme, but no essential change in the over-centralisation of authority involved in his "reform." By 1864, however, the inconveniences and substantial disadvantages of the system had become so felt that the Porte decided on a partial return to the old organisation, and a measure for the fresh re-settlement of the provincial administration was then framed by A'ali Pasha. This was first applied to the province of the Danube, and the result of an eighteen months' experiment there under Midhat Pasha being satisfactory, it was, in 1867, extended to the whole empire.

Under this scheme, Asiatic Turkey is now administratively divided into eighteen vilayets or first-class provinces, and four separate districts forming *mutessarifliks* or special governments. The former are: those of Brousa, Aïdin (Smyrna), Konia, Adana, Angora, Castamouni, Sivas, Trebizond, Erzeroum, Van, Diarbekir, Aleppo, Syria, Baghdad, Bussora, Yemen, the Hedjaz, and the Isles (or Ægean Archipelago);[1] while the minor governments are: the Lebanon, Jerusalem, Djanik, and Divriki. The

[1] Scutari, the Prince's Islands, and all the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus form a sanjak (the sixth) of the special vilayet of Constantinople, into which the capital and its suburbs were formed in 1869.

vilayets vary in geographical extent, and, according to their size, are divided into from three to five (or in the case of Syria seven) sanjaks, which are subdivided into kazas, or districts, and these again into nahiés or communes, composed of small groups of villages.[1] The vilayet, which mostly bears the name of its chief town, is administered by a vali, or governor-general, in rank a mushir (highest class Pasha); the sanjaks by caimacams, or lieutenant-governors, ranking as mutessarifs or second-class Pashas—both appointed by the Porte—and the kazas by mudirs, or directors, ostensibly elected by the inhabitants, but in reality named by the vali, and the communes by mouktars, or mayors, also supposed to be elected for a year, but as a rule similarly imposed on their constituents by the mudir. These mouktars are merely the *hodja-bashis* of the old régime under a new name. Indeed, one object of the vilayet "reform" was to supersede the old municipal privileges which had existed in Asia from the time of Bayazid I. and in Europe from that of Murad II. Under these each village had been virtually ruled by an elected chief, called the *hodja-bashi*, who directed its police, apportioned its allotted share of taxes, and acted generally as its representative with the higher authorities, who had thus little or no control over municipal affairs. In name, but in that only, the new system extinguished the *hodja-bashi*,

[1] The division, in fact, closely resembles that of a French department into arrondissements, cantons, and communes.

who survives in all but some trifling details of his old prerogative in the mouktar. The latter, like his predecessor, is, as I have said, still nominally elected by the commune for a year's service, but is in fact named by the mudir for an indefinite term, *i.e.*, as long as his patron himself manages to retain office, or as he is not over-bidden by some other aspirant to the post.[1] In theory popular suffrage is the basis of three-fourths of this scheme of provincial administration, but equally in the case of the various medjlises, or councils, which form part of it, as in that of the mudirs and mouktars, the principle is in practice reduced to a mockery and a snare.

Besides these four grades of executive chiefs, each province is further weighted with a very numerous staff of administrative *aides*. First in rank of these, after the vali, is the mouhassabijee, or controller of the revenue, who represents the central Ministry of Finance, to which, after payment of all local expenses, the net balance of the revenue raised is supposed to be remitted; next, the mektoubjee, or director of correspondence and keeper of the provincial archives; after him the mouavin, or "political

[1] This municipal element has been retained, or rather re-created, after the European model, in most of the larger towns, in which (where such luxuries are indulged in) public lighting, street cleaning, and other details of purely civic administration are controlled by a committee, partly named by the authorities and partly chosen by the town tax-payers. Thus in Constantinople, Smyrna, Beyrout, and a few other towns, purely civic affairs are so managed, subject to the ultimate authority of the vali or caimacam, as the case may be.

assistant," usually a Rayah, who serves as a buffer between the vali and the foreign consuls—relatively much greater men in the provinces than are their diplomatic chiefs in the capital; then an engineer-in-chief—mostly a foreigner, whose qualification would not always satisfy the Institution—charged with the direction of the local public works; and finally, in this upper hierarchy, the moufettish, or inspector-general of agriculture and trade, who is supposed to keep accurate record of the produce and imports and exports of the province. The whole of these are named from Stamboul, as are also the heads of the judicial, police, and customs services to be presently mentioned. Then follows a lengthening file of nazirs, mohurjees, and kiatibs of every class, in number almost beyond count. Of absolutely the whole of these, from the governor-general down to the lowest clerk or mouktar, it may be affirmed that not one owes his post to personal merit and qualification, but all to bribery or intrigue. The vali himself—usually with the help of an Armenian saraff, unless he has before been in high office and made a "pile" —buys his appointment from some Palace favourite or other patron at the Porte; the caimacam has not seldom been the pipe-bearer or other more ignoble favourite of a similar grandee, or, failing that advantage, has bribed and toadied the great man's servants for the post; while the mouhassabijee, the mektoubjee, the mouavin, and other superior functionaries each and all obtain theirs by similar means;

and so on down to the lowest round of the official ladder.

The same may be said of the cadis, chief and subordinate, who administer "justice" in the *shériat* and *kànoun* courts of first instance and appeal; of the commandant (*alaï-beyi*) of the police; and of the directors of the customs who levy transit on import and export duties in those vilayets in which *gumruks* exist: some corrupt influence has determined the appointment of the whole—with what effect on the character of their official conduct will be seen.

The machinery worked by this small army of functionaries and employés consists, first, of an "Administrative Council," presided over by the vali, and including the chief cadi, the mouhassabijee, the mektoubjee, the mouavin, and six other "elected" members, three of whom are Mussulmans and three Rayahs; a proportion which, even if the latter had a spark of independence (which they never have), gives a swamping majority to the other side. The special function of this body is, "to deliberate on all that concerns measures relating to the general administration, to the revenue, to foreign affairs, to public works and agriculture, without, however, any right of interference in judicial affairs." Besides this, there is at the provincial headquarters a "Council General," also under the presidency of the vali, composed of four "elected" members (two Mussulmans and two Rayahs) for each kaza of the vilayet, convoked once a year (1) "to study questions relating to the making,

maintenance, and police of the trunk roads of the vilayet and the minor routes of the kazas and communes, as also the construction, repair, and maintenance of the municipal buildings, and to examine the demands of the sanjaks and kazas thereanent; (2) to deliberate on measures concerning the control of the roads; (3) to discuss the means for extending and promoting agriculture and trade; and (4) to consider questions relating to the equitable allotment of taxes in the sanjaks, kazas, and nahiés." But neither this nor the Council of Administration has any legislative or executive power; they can merely vote on such matters as are submitted to them, and their "recommendations" are then forwarded by the vali to the Porte, for approval or *veto*, by the particular Ministry concerned. The administrative scheme of the sanjaks and kazas is modelled after that of the vilayet, only on a reduced scale; the caimacams and mudirs here respectively taking the place of the vali, to whom reports of all official business in both jurisdictions are transmitted for his sanction or rescission.

The first imperial interest everywhere is, of course, the collection of the taxes; and in connection with this occur three-fourths of the oppression from which the population suffers. But some detailed statement of these fiscal abuses will be more conveniently given in the Chapter on Agriculture, the industry in connection with which most of them arise. Enough here to say that, while the chief impost of the

tithe is farmed out, many of the others are collected by the vilayet authorities for direct account of the Government; and in the discharge of this function they have full play for both oppression of the tax-payers and fraud upon the treasury. For the encashment of money of these taxes there is no fixed season, and when an order, therefore, arrives from Stamboul for the remittance of a particular sum, the vali sends it on to the caimacams, they again to the mudirs, and these in the last resort to the mouktars and the police, to levy the money *à tout prix.* The partition of the amount assessed on each commune is a nominal duty of the local medjlis; but the mouktar and the police officer generally take this profitable function upon themselves, and apportion the sum as they please. The amount actually extorted of course much exceeds that claimed by the Treasury: the balance represents what is "eaten" in ascending scale by the mouktar, mudir, caimacam, and vali; as each in turn disgorges a part of his plunder to the chief next above him. Nor is the governor-general the last in the chain of beneficiaries from this systematic extortion; he again has to feed his patron at the Palace or the Porte, for, failing that, his post would not be worth a month's purchase.

The various medjlises, or councils, being nominally elective, are supposed to act as a check on executive abuses, and to give their tax-paying constituents a voice, however feeble, in the local administration. But here again the divergence between theory and

practice is very wide. Apart from the fact that most of the "elected" members are the mere nominees of the vali, caimacam, or mudir—according as the council may be that of the vilayet, sanjak, or kaza—the interest of the whole lies in playing into the hands of these functionaries; and from the chief medjlis of the vilayet, therefore, to that of the smallest kaza, an intelligent and mutually profitable harmony is the rule. If an indisposition to vote "straight," or to set their seals to any document that may be submitted to them, is ever manifested, the recalcitrant is sure to be a Mussulman, for the Rayah members would no more think of opposing the local authority than of refusing a bribe in cases where the mudir, caimacam, or vali has no personal interest. Not that metallic arguments are more potent with Christian or Jew than with their Moslem colleagues, whether *ex officio* or elected, for this is a logic that from the president to the lowest scribe, carries conviction to the minds of all.

It is, however, in the administration of justice that this general rottenness of Turkish provincial government produces its widest and worst effects. Although in many of its incidents and relations, society is here less amenable to law than in more civilised communities, it is still sufficiently so to have in the *Multequa* and other Ottoman codes—if at all honestly administered — ample guarantees for substantial justice and adequate protection against most of the existing abuses. But dispensed as it is, even

between Mussulmans, the law is merely another engine of oppression at the service of the rich man who can pay for it, against the poor one who cannot. The legal machinery of a vilayet consists—apart from the special jurisdiction of the Rayah ecclesiastical authorities over their own people—(1) of a chief cadi named by the Sheikh-ul-Islâm, who exercises an appellate authority over a staff of subordinate cadis and their naïbs (deputies) dispensing Koranic law in the sanjaks and kazas; (2) of a high civil court, presided over by the chief cadi, and consisting of six "elected" assessors—three Mussulmans and three Rayahs—supplemented by an official delegate. The jurisdiction of this tribunal is curiously limited, since it extends neither to actions between Mussulmans to which the *shêriat* law only applies, to Rayah causes within the competence of their own ecclesiastical authorities, to criminal cases, nor to issues that properly belong to the commercial courts; (3) of an appellate criminal tribunal, also presided over by the chief cadi, and similarly constituted to the civil court. The sentences of this, as of the last, are referred for execution to the vali, who, in capital cases, has to await their confirmation by the Porte;[1] and (4), of a high commercial court, with appellate

[1] During his government of the Danube province and afterwards of Baghdad, Midhat Pasha made short work of this limitation of his powers. He hanged right and left where justice seemed to require it, and in a few months reduced both provinces to a state of lawfulness unremembered by the oldest inhabitant.

jurisdiction over the commercial tribunals of the sanjaks. In their judicial as in their civil administration, the sanjaks and kazas are similarly organised, only here again on a smaller scale, and with appeal lying from their courts of first instance to the supreme tribunals of the province.[1]

In theory, such a machine seems to fairly meet the needs of substantial justice at such a stage of civilisation as these Asiatic provinces have reached, and in principle the law itself is in the main equitable and good, but its administration is utterly corrupt and bad. From the highest court of the vilayet to the lowest of the commune, bribery decides the issue of nearly every case. In his private station the Turk is one of the most upright and truthful of men; but convert him into an official, and especially a cadi, and he becomes, as a rule, one of the veriest knaves in creation. Even when not swayed by corrupt influences, too, the Oriental mind, capricious in its best moods, is especially loose and sudden

[1] Besides a cadi, there is also a mufti attached to each kaza, whose function is to interpret the Koran and its commentaries, to assist at the local councils, and to give *fetvas*, or legal opinions, on points of law in causes coming before the courts, with which they have a recognised (though not conclusive) authority. Like some other "opinions" nearer home, which have not this weight, these are given for a fee, and can generally be had so framed as to support the interest suggested by the "case." The mufti, however, beats the consulting counsel by not seldom giving favourable opinions to *both* the contending parties, in which case the puzzled cadi disregards the conflicting *fetvas*, and decides according to the "retainer" already given to himself.

in its decisions, interpreting the law admirably by natural instinct, but treating quite recklessly the facts to which it has to be applied. The tales of summary justice rife in Eastern story are but so many acts of folly made respectable, or even splendid, by the erratic equity they report. Thus in a sense ennobled by tradition and example, levity of judicial decision has long been the rule with the Mussulman bench, from the court of the Sheikh-ul-Islâm down to the smallest provincial *mekkemé*. Under pressure of temptation, habitudes of such looseness easily yielded to the inducements of self-interest, till, from being merely capricious in his decisions, the Turkish judge became wiser in his generation and took to selling them to the highest bidder.[1] When the practice

[1] In fair play to both mufti and cadi it is only just to record that the Christian assessors who sit with them in the mixed courts are no whit less corrupt. A case—not a solitary one—within my own knowledge may be mentioned in illustration of this fact. A Greek Rayah built an hotel in one of the Prince's Islands in the Marmora, and then much over-insured the house and its alleged furniture in the Constantinople agency of an English insurance company. A few days before the time at which the hotel was to have been opened for business it was burned down, and the owner thereupon claimed the full amount of the policy. The agent, suspecting foul play, refused payment, and instituted inquiries, which proved that the only furniture in the house had been some bundles of straw in the basement, and that the fellow had late at night fired these with his own hand. The Greek was thereupon charged with arson before the Ministry of Police, and an official investigation having established the presumption of his guilt, he was committed for trial. In the meantime, however, he had begun a civil action in the Tidjaret Court against the company, and as this lay within a

became general, history sayeth not, but certain it is that memory equally runs not to the time it was unknown. The conditions under which judicial appointments have long been, and still are, made throughout the empire sufficiently explain and go far to excuse this universal corruption. The rank and assured salary of the Sheikh-ul-Islâm place him above all but exceptional temptations, and the venality that poisons justice in his court attaches, therefore, rather to his immediate subordinates than to himself; but below him it taints the whole judicial body down, as I have said, to the lowest provincial naïb. The reason of this lies on the surface of the facts. The cadi, whose tenure of a particular post

separate jurisdiction, it was not affected by the criminal proceedings. On the contrary, while these were corruptly delayed, the civil claim was as corruptly hurried on, and in spite of the defendant's application for its postponement till the criminal charge had been tried, the day for its hearing was fixed. Under these circumstances, as the Tidjaret would decide the case on the simple issues that the house had been insured and had been burned—no matter how—a verdict for the full amount of the policy was almost certain. At this juncture one of the Rayah members of the Court called on the advocate for the company and offered, nevertheless, to secure him a judgment for a bribe of 250*l.* After some haggling this was finally reduced to 100*l.*, the payment of which the company at first refused to sanction, but on it being made clear to them by telegraph that the choice lay between this and an adverse verdict, they finally consented, and the Greek, not having outbid them, lost his case. So far as the defendants were concerned, the end, of course, in this instance justified the means, but the motive of the Rayah judge was none the less corrupt. He is now, I believe, president of one of the Stamboul courts, and, of course, a rich and respected functionary. Like cases are of every-day occurrence.

seldom extends beyond one, or at most two, years, buys it from the Sheikh-ul-Islâm or one of his creatures, and, having a merely nominal salary of from 1,000 to 3,000 piastres a month—108*l.* to 324*l.* a year—has only the twelve or twenty-four months within which to recoup his outlay and make the speculation pay. This he does by, in turn, selling the office of naïb for his sanjak or kaza, as the case may be, and by coining his own *ilâms* (judgments) into dollars while he may. When ousted by a new purchaser of his post, he returns to Stamboul, able to take a year's holiday, and at its close to buy a better appointment than before. His deputies—who in many instances receive no salaries, but are supposed to live by court fees, which in Turkey are always paid by the winning side—have, in the meantime, grown rich even faster than their chief, and—if their rank in the Ulema permit it—in their turn become cadis, first of a kaza, then of a sanjak, and finally it may be of a vilayet. Thus is the right of administering justice bought, and the thing itself sold, in the *shériat* courts throughout every province of Turkey east and west of the Bosphorus. In the mixed tribunals, in which the Rayah assessors have also to be reckoned with, the cadi or other president suffers from their competition; but, barring this, the justice dealt out at the Tidjaret differs in nothing from that of the *mekkemé*, The highest bidder gets it. If the parties are both too poor to bribe, the Turk may then have a better chance than the Christian, as

either the sole judge or the majority of the court is already on his side; but piastres weigh more than creed, and the ghiaour, *dona ferens*, fares better than the most orthodox but empty-handed "believer" between Mecca and Eyoub. Against metallic arguments, in fact, religious sympathy in the whole of these tribunals avails neither Moslem nor Rayah.

In proof that what precedes in no way overstates the case against either Turk or Christian in this matter of administering justice, I cannot do better than quote the testimony of a very competent local witness, Mr. Taylor, H.M. late Consul at Erzeroum:

"In the matter of justice as administered in the local courts," says Mr. Taylor in his report for 1867, since which the facts have in no way improved, "the poor can never hold their own with the rich. Excepting in the new vilayet of Erzeroum, the cadi has no salary, but, on the contrary, has paid for his post, and therefore appoints as his naïbs in the different sub-districts such pedlars in law as assure him the highest monthly sum for the office. Justice therefore for a poor man is, unless with his equals, a fluctuating commercial object; with others he can palpably have no chance of success, considering the pliability of Turkish law and the greed of the administrators, in any case however just; particularly as a variety of cases, properly belonging to the medjlis, are smuggled or forced into the cadi's court by the Government, either to play into his hands for mutual benefit, or to silence that functionary, who, next to the Pasha,

is the first member of the Grand Council; that ought by the *kanoun* to be argued and decided in the medj-lis. It would be supposed, as every community is or ought to be represented in the medjlis, that the poor would have always sufficient remedy against the rich oppressor. But considering the constitution of the different councils, the members of which have either bought their seats, or have been elected on account of their suppleness or general indifference, they are simply clogs upon, or preventers of, justice. No man of standing or recognised pretensions belongs to them: they are no standards of wealth or intellect; and the consequence is that the seats are accepted for the emoluments that incidentally attach to them, and that therefore a few Moslem bullies force the votes. . . . At the present moment in Diar-bekir, there are no less than nineteen Moslem to four Christian members, when at the most ten are allowed. In the second medjlis, containing eleven members all Moslems, there sits a notorious receiver of stolen goods, whom I myself saw in prison three years ago, with chains on his legs, undergoing an imprisonment of three years for his past crimes, and the morals or public character of the rest would hardly bear a close scrutiny. Among all the Moslem members of the two councils, there are sixteen only who read or write, and twelve neither read nor write at all, or very imperfectly, while no one of the Christians can read or write Turkish at all."

I may here add, that all *hâtts* and firmans to the

contrary notwithstanding, Christian testimony is still universally rejected in the *mekkemés*, as it is indeed in the court of the Sheikh-ul-Islâm himself, under the very nose of the foreign ambassadors. It is formally received in the mixed commercial courts, but even there weighs little or nothing against documentary evidence.

Nor is the state of things much, if at all, better in the denominational courts of the Rayahs themselves, with which neither the Turkish law nor its agents in any way meddle. In accordance with the chartered rights conceded at the conquest, the non-Mussulman communities are, for nearly all civil and most correctional disputes between themselves, subject to their respective hierarchies, the patriarchs and bishops of which exercise judicial as well as spiritual authority within their several dioceses. In these episcopal courts, over which the bishop or his vicar-general presides, the rich man defeats the poor as certainly as before any cadi in the land. Even in the capital, "Fanar justice" has long been a by-word, and in the provinces the alloy is baser still. Nor is it merely in the decision of cases between litigants that this judicial prerogative of the patriarchs and bishops is abused: it serves also, especially among the Greeks, as a means to extort money from the laity as pretended church dues, to an extent that renders their own superior clergy the worst fiscal oppressors of the Rayah communities. In this respect, the analogy between a bishop and a cadi is close: both buy their

offices, and their chief care is to make the investment *pay*. In doing so, the cadi is the franker, and therefore the more respectable, extortioner of the two.

To this general negation of justice may be traced nearly all the executive and other abuses from which Moslems and Rayahs alike suffer. The actual law applicable to both is fairly good, but its administration deprives it of all protective value for either. There is nowhere any systematic oppression of the Christian nor special favour to the Mussulman: on the contrary, if, in the general impartiality of misrule, there be any distinction, it is to the advantage of the Rayah, who is always loud in his outcry, and has the ready ear of the foreign Consul or passing traveller open to his complaint, while *kismet* and Allah are the only comforters of the Turk. Still, the prime want of the whole is LAW—controlling equally both rulers and ruled, be the creed of the latter what it may.

And as with the dispensers of justice all round, so with their executive agents, the *zaptiehs*, or police. The colonel commanding these in a vilayet is himself named from Stamboul, but his subordinate officers are practically either his own nominees or those of the vali, while the men are volunteers furnished with any kind of old arms by the Government, and supposed to receive a pay of 40 pias. (less than 7*s*.) a month. This pittance is, of course, not regularly paid, but in its stead black mail is freely levied from the peasantry; and in connection with almost every

matter police action, like the cadi's judgments, can be generally either averted or procured—by a bribe. The character of a force thus conditioned may be imagined: in Europe it would probably be worse; in Asia, at any rate, it adds largely to the sum of administrative abuse.

To this general organisation, however, there are two or three not geographically important, but in other respects considerable exceptions. Though erected into the vilayet of the Bahr-i-séfid Jezaïri (Islands of the White Sea) as long ago as 1852, the Archipelago continued to enjoy its former separate insular autonomy till 1872, when its governing local councils and fixed tax (*mahtu*) were abolished and, with the exception of Samos, the whole group was brought under the new organisation. It is now divided into the five sanjaks of Bigha, Mytilene, Scio (also formerly autonomous), Cos, and Rhodes, which, like the mainland provinces, are further subdivided into kazas and nahiés. The residence of the vali is at Rhodes. Samos, however, being protected by the London Convention of 1828—9, remains autonomous under a Christian "Prince" named by the Porte, with a legislative council of four elected senators and a chamber of representatives consisting of twenty-six deputies and the local archbishop. The island is divided into four arrondissements (Vathy, Carlovassi, Marathocampo, and Khora), and with a population of 34,000—all Greeks, except the small Turkish garrison—pays a fixed yearly tribute to the

Porte of about 4,000*l*.[1] The Hedjaz, therefore, is now the only one of the eighteen vilayets in which the full machinery of the new system is not at work. It comprises the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, with the surrounding territory down to the Red Sea at Djedda, beyond a narrow cordon round which; and one or two of the other small ports along its seaboard from Moilah to Halli, none but Moslems may reside or travel. Hence as the *shériat* is everywhere the only law in force, except in Djeddah, the mixed medjlises of the other provinces have no existence. The nominal administrator of the whole is the vali, who resides at Mecca, with a lieutenant at Medina ; but the real governor is the Schériff of Mecca, the hereditary guardian of the city, whose spiritual influence throughout Moslemdom rivals that of the Caliph, and who here, in the Belâd-el-Haram (sacred territory), is virtually supreme. The other Arabian province of Yemen, with a vali resident at Sana, is in every way assimilated to the northern vilayets. The Lebanon forms the exception among the four minor provinces, being ruled since the massacres of 1860 under what may be called an international statute which vests the administration in a Christian governor named by the Porte for ten years. He is assisted by a mixed council chosen equitably from the various Druze and Maronite

[1] The island has also the right of flying its own commercial flag, which is bi-coloured, red above and blue below, with a white cross in the upper inner corner.

districts of the Mountain, which are in turn sub-governed by functionaries belonging to the preponderant local creed. The experiment has worked well, and, although the two rival races are as far as ever from social fusion, its other results have been on the whole so satisfactory that the Lebanon may be fairly pronounced the best governed Turkish province on either side of the Dardanelles. The three separate mutessarifliks of Jerusalem, Djanik, and Divriki, differ only in the rank and number of their administrative staffs from an ordinary vilayet. The first includes the Holy City and the country east and west of it from Moab to the Mediterranean, comprised in four kazas; the second, the far-distant tract along the Black Sea between Sinope and Ordoo, sub-divided into five; and the third, the rich mineral district between Sivas and Erzinghan, into seven.

Such, in brief, is the scheme of government under which Asiatic Turkey is now administered. In many points it was—or rather would have been—importantly modified by Midhat Pasha's "constitution," but as that short-lived reform produced no single change beyond the Bosphorus, I have, in outlining the system still in force, followed the constituent "law" of 1867. The scheme itself, though with many defects, is, it will be seen, on the whole not a bad one, and if honestly worked out would fairly meet the administrative wants of so backward a population. It maintains, indeed, the ascendency of the dominant race and creed, but it substitutes for

the old over-centralisation that paralysed everything a large degree of local authority, and provides tax-payers with a means of at least partial self-defence against fiscal and other oppression which, if it were not neutralised by executive abuse, would go far towards affording this protection. But in practical outcome no administrative machinery could well be worse. In a subsequent chapter, I will venture to suggest such a modest measure of reform as long local observation induces me to believe possible even under the present *régime*, and as could not fail, if honestly carried out, to immensely improve the leaden, though seldom cruel, misrule from which both Mussulmans and Christians now alike suffer. More than this it would be visionary to hope for under any Turkish Government whatever.

END OF VOL I

LONDON R CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS